

THE CHILLING ARCHIVES OF HORROR COMICS!™



Mr. KARSWELL

HAUNTED HORROR™

#9



THE MASTER OF THE HORROR-GO-
ROUND INVITES YOU TO HOP ON!
WILL YOU? DARE YOU?

FORELOCK THE WARLOCK



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LIKE SLIMY
PACK RATS, YOU
ARE ATTRACTED TO
THESE OLD FUNNY BOOKS,
AREN'T YOU,
YOU VORACIOUS VERMIN?
TAKE THIS ISSUE OF OUR LATEST
HAUNTED HORROR BACK TO YOUR
NEST AND CHEW ON ITS CONTENTS.
YOU'LL FIND EACH STORY DELICIOUS
AND TO YOUR LIKING AS EVERY
TERRIFYING TALE WAS WRITTEN AND
DRAWN BY RAT-LIKE COMIC BOOK
CREATORS. I, YOUR HORROR HOST
AND RAT EXTERMINATOR, FORELOCK
THE WARLOCK, HAVE LACED EACH
PAGE WITH A SPECIAL POISON!
IF YOU'RE HOLDING THIS NOW
IN YOUR FILTHY RAT CLAWS,
IT'S TOO LATE FOR YOU!
HAHAHAHAHA!!!



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IS IT POSSIBLE? IS THIS THE REAL...AND HORRIBLE...EXPLANATION OF THE "FLYING SAUCER" MYSTERY? WHIRLING IN OUT OF OMINOUS OUTER SPACE, A DEADLY GHOST-PLAGUE TERRIFIES THE AMERICAN CONTINENT! HOW CAN THESE STRANGE SUPER-GHOSTS THREATEN EVERY LIFE ON EARTH? AND WHAT CAN BE DONE TO COMBAT THESE DEVIL-DEMONS?

ONE NIGHT, OVER DESERT AREA IN THE WEST, HIGH-FLYING SAUCER-SHAPED SHIPS DISGORGE A DEADLY CARGO...

KLAXDAX!
KLAX!

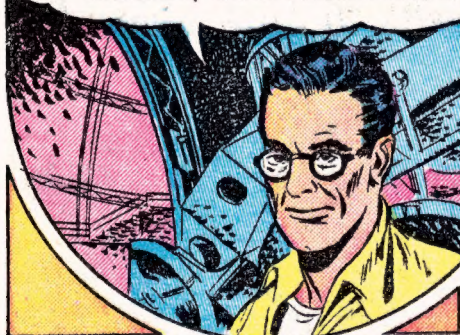
GOOD HEAVENS!
IT'S RAINING TINY
DEAD MONSTERS!

RUN FOR
YOUR
LIVES!

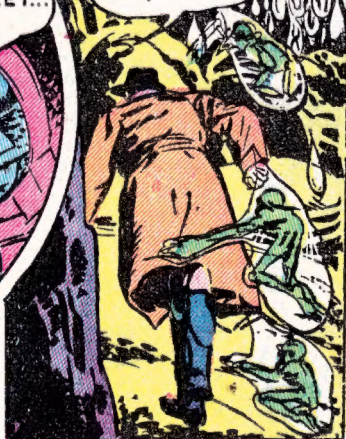
NOW THOSE FLYING
SAUGERS ARE SPINNING
BACK... OUT INTO
STAR SPACE!

WHILE ON THE MOUNTAIN-TOP RETREAT, IS DON BLANT, A NOTED SCIENTIST AND STUDENT OF SPIRITUALISM AND STARS...

FIRST ALL THOSE RED LINES SHOOTING FROM THE PLANET MARS, AND NOW THOSE STRANGE GLOWING LIGHTS IN THE VALLEY... SOMEHOW, I'M AFRAID...AFRAID!



BUT I MUST SEE WHAT'S GOING ON...UGGHH! WHAT'S THAT COLD AND SLIMY THING THAT TOUCHED ME?

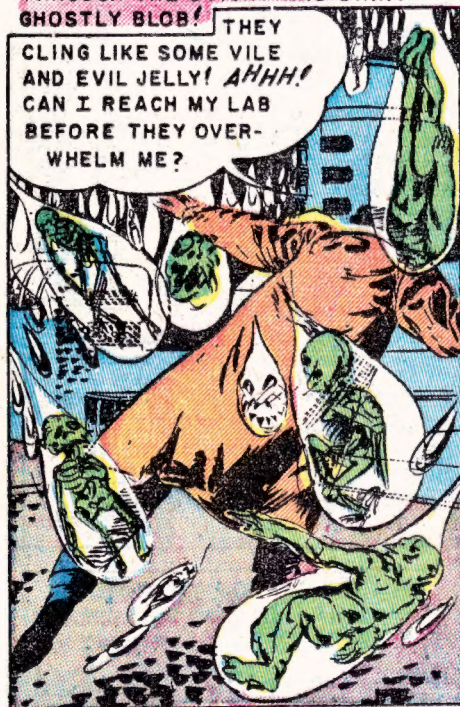


SKELETONS? DEAD CREATURES? THESE CORPSES ARE SURROUNDING ME!



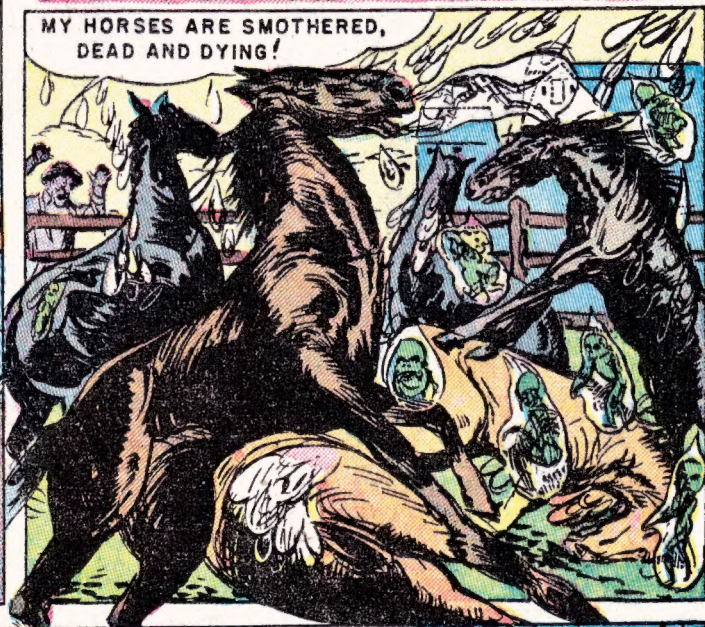
HORRIFIED, DON FIGHTS FOR HIS LIFE THROUGH THE STICKY AND SHINY GHOSTLY BLOB!

THEY CLING LIKE SOME VILE AND EVIL JELLY! AH!!! CAN I REACH MY LAB BEFORE THEY OVERWHELM ME?



AND IN THE FARM VALLEY AND TOWN BELOW, THE AWESOME RAIN OF UNKNOWN "THINGS" COVERS ALL... SPREADING FEAR AND DEATH AND DESTRUCTION...

MY HORSES ARE SMOTHERED, DEAD AND DYING!



ABANDON THE CARS! RUN...IF YOU CAN!

IS THIS THE END OF THE WORLD?



WITHIN THE HOUR, AT THE STATE CAPITOL, THE GOVERNOR DECLARES AN EMERGENCY AND ORDERS MARTIAL LAW...

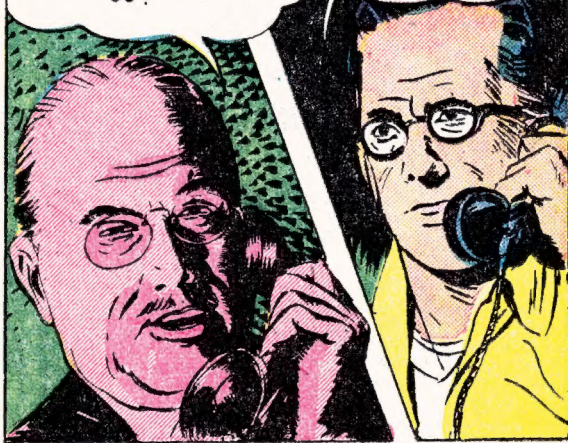
...USE PLANES, ALL STATE TROOPERS! WHATEVER THIS MENACE IS...IT'S TOTAL WAR!

I'LL TRY TO GET THE SCIENTIST, DON BLANT...COMPLAINTS ALL COMING FROM HIS AREA!

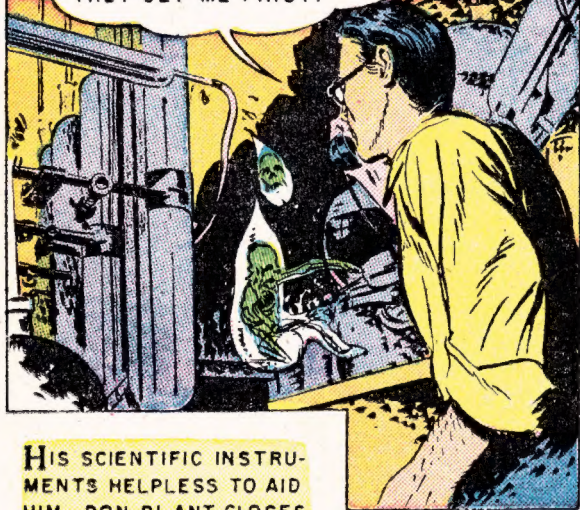


YOU'RE AN AUTHORITY ON THE OCCULT! WHAT ARE THOSE "THINGS"? BLANT, CAN YOU HELP US?

I'VE GOT TO HELP, SIR! THEY'RE OOZING INTO MY LAB NOW!



MY THEORY IS, THEY'RE FROM THE PLANET, MARS. I'LL CALL YOU BACK...UNLESS THEY GET ME FIRST!



HIS SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS HELPLESS TO AID HIM, DON BLANT CLOSES HIS EYES AND CALLS FOR HELP FROM THE SPIRIT WORLD OF THE DEAD!

ALLEN... MY LONG-DEAD BROTHER! YOU'VE OFTEN ADVISED ME...HELP ME NOW!



NOW THEY'RE MASSING FOR AN ATTACK! THEY FADE AND ALMOST DISAPPEAR... JUST LIKE GHOSTS!

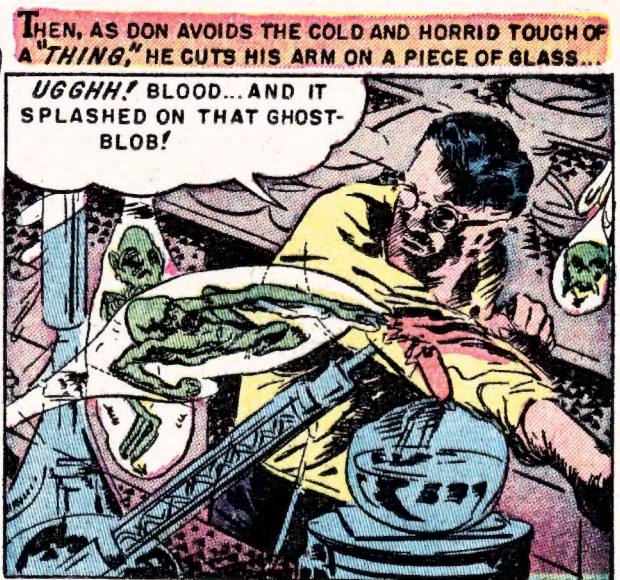


IS THIS THE PHANTOM "FORM" OF DEAD ALLEN BLANT TAKING SHAPE OUT OF NOTHING?

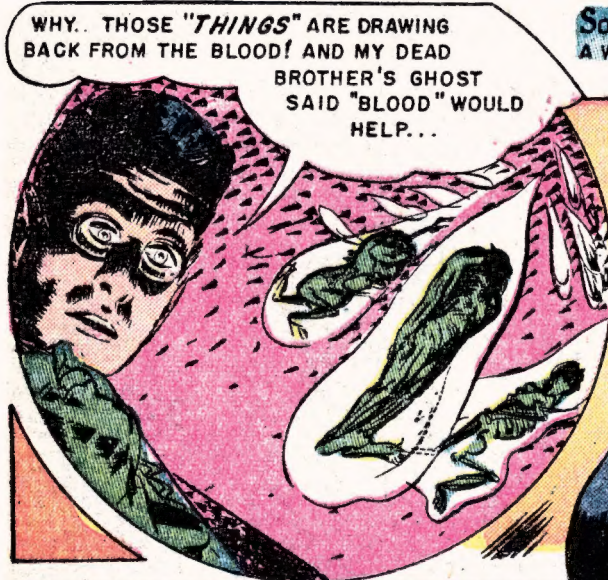
THESE "THINGS" ARE GHOSTS, AS I AM! BUT THEY ARE GHOSTS OF DEAD MARS-MEN! FIGHT THEM WITH BLOOD...BLOOD...



ALLEN... WAS THAT YOU...YOUR
SPIRIT VOICE? BUT HOW CAN
MY "BLOOD" HELP ME NOW?



THEN, AS DON AVOIDS THE COLD AND HORRID TOUCH OF
A "THING," HE CUTS HIS ARM ON A PIECE OF GLASS...
UGGHH! BLOOD... AND IT
SPLASHED ON THAT GHOST-
BLOB!



WHY... THOSE "THINGS" ARE DRAWING
BACK FROM THE BLOOD! AND MY DEAD
BROTHER'S GHOST
SAID "BLOOD" WOULD
HELP...



SO THE BLEEDING DON BLANT ACCIDENTALLY FINDS
A WEAPON TO COMBAT THE GRISLY TERROR...

IF BLOOD STOPS THEM...
MAYBE I CAN SAVE MYSELF!



I'VE DRIPPED A FULL BLOOD-CIRCLE! IF THEY
DON'T CROSS IT, I'VE GOT A CHANCE!



GOVERNOR I MAY HAVE THE SECRET THAT
WILL SAVE US ALL FROM THESE GHOSTLY
HORRORS! IT'S A DESPERATE CHANCE...
BUT TRY THIS

MEANWHILE, THE "THINGS" ARE WREAKING HAVOC EVERYWHERE...

EEEE! NOW THEY'RE IN THE WATER PIPES...AND WALLS! ABANDON THE HOUSE... RUN!



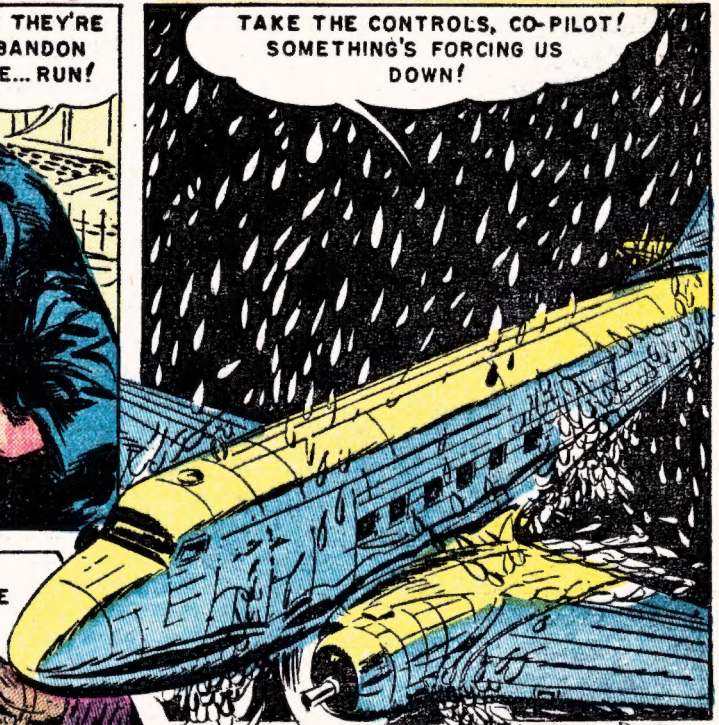
NOW THOSE "THINGS" ARE IN THE SHIP!

AGGHH! THEY'RE ON THE CONTROLS!



IN THE AIR, THE GHOSTLY GLOBULES FLOAT...

TAKE THE CONTROLS, CO-PILOT! SOMETHING'S FORCING US DOWN!



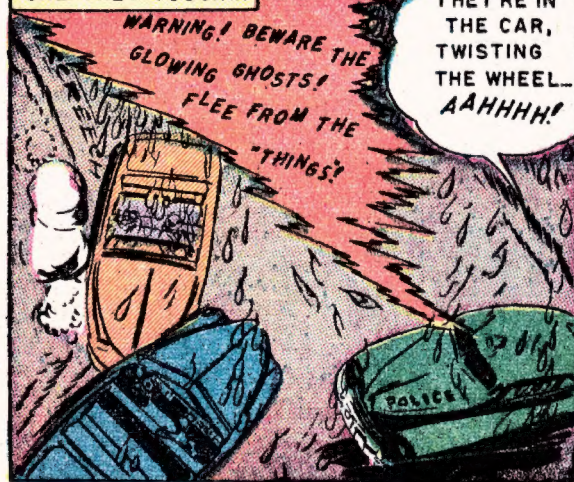
THEY'RE ALL OVER ME... I'D RATHER BE DEAD!



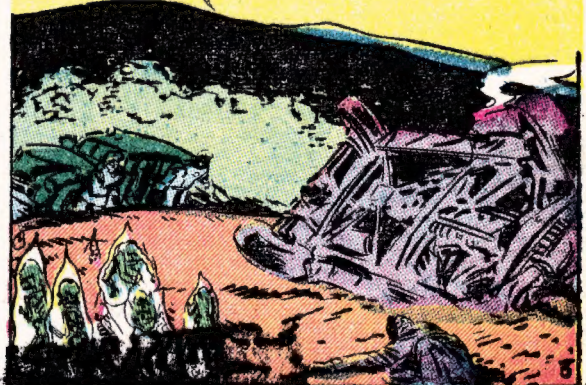
ON THE GROUND, POLICE PATROLS TRY TO WARN ALL CITIZENS...BUT THE DRIPPING MENACES DOOM ANYONE THEY TOUCH...

WARNING! BEWARE THE GLOWING GHOSTS! FLEE FROM THE "THINGS!"

THEY'RE IN THE CAR, TWISTING THE WHEEL... AAHHHH!

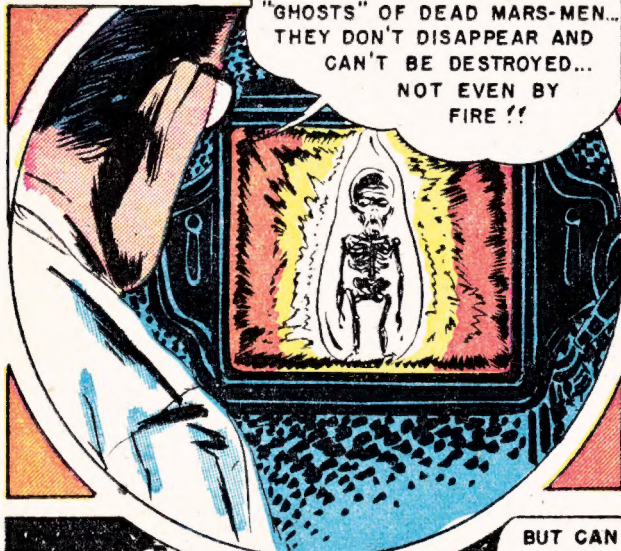


LOOK! THE "THINGS" DO AVOID HUMAN BLOOD! RADIO THE GOVERNOR THAT DON BLANT MAY BE RIGHT...



IN DON BLANT'S LAB, HIS EXPERIMENTS SHOW AMAZING RESULTS...

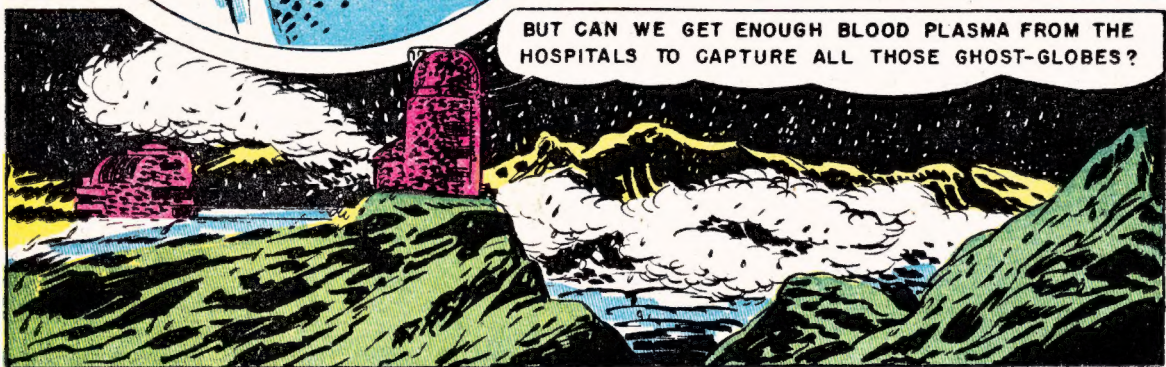
IT'S FANTASTIC... WEIRD!
"GHOSTS" OF DEAD MARS-MEN...
THEY DON'T DISAPPEAR AND
CAN'T BE DESTROYED...
NOT EVEN BY
FIRE!!



BUT A THIN PLASTIG-FILM BUBBLE MIXED WITH A SPOT OF BLOOD HOLDS THEM QUIET PRISONERS!



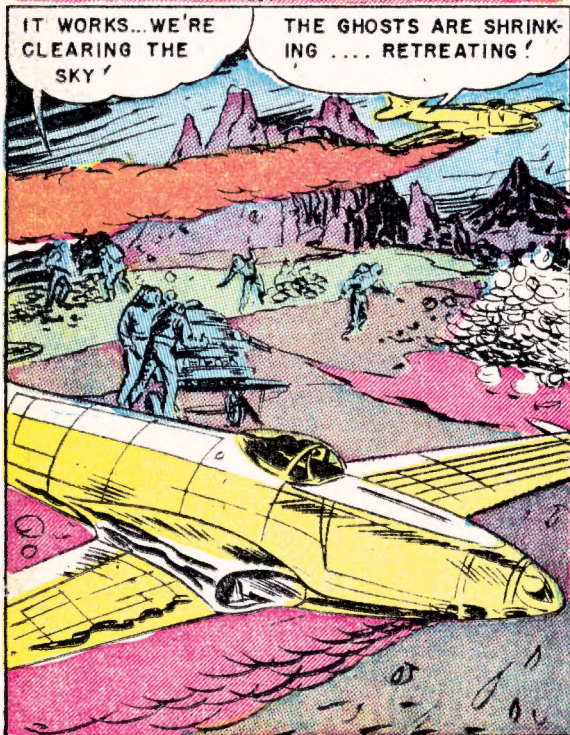
BUT CAN WE GET ENOUGH BLOOD PLASMA FROM THE HOSPITALS TO CAPTURE ALL THOSE GHOST-GLOBES?



AS DAWN BREAKS, DON BLANT DIRECTS SPRAYING CREWS... AND THE "THINGS" ARE ROUNDED UP!

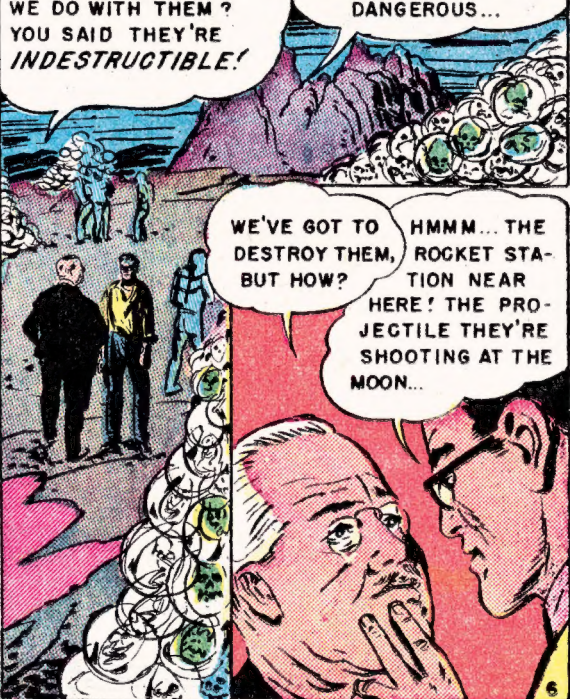
IT WORKS... WE'RE
CLEARING THE
SKY!

THE GHOSTS ARE SHRINK-
ING RETREATING!



BLANT, NOW WE'VE COL-
LECTED THESE GHOSTLY
HORRORS... WHAT CAN
WE DO WITH THEM?
YOU SAID THEY'RE
INDESTRUCTIBLE!

HOW LONG WILL BLOOD
SPRAY CONTROL THEM?
THEY'RE UNDYING...
DANGEROUS...

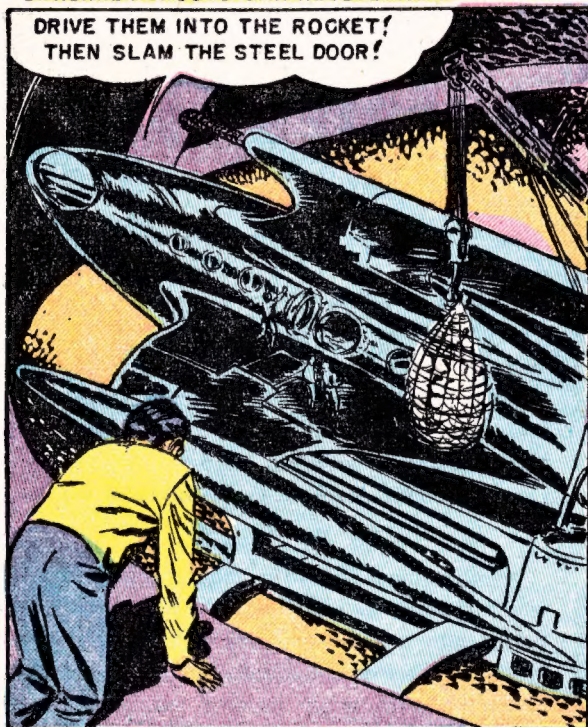


WE'VE GOT TO
DESTROY THEM,
BUT HOW?

HMMM... THE
ROCKET STA-
TION NEAR
HERE! THE PRO-
JECTILE THEY'RE
SHOOTING AT THE
MOON...

ARMY AUTHORITIES CONSENT... AND BEFORE THE SHRUNKEN GHOSTS CAN RECOVER...

DRIVE THEM INTO THE ROCKET!
THEN SLAM THE STEEL DOOR!

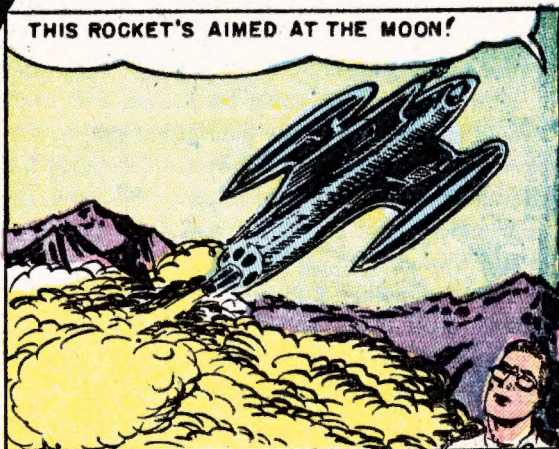


UGGHH! THEY HAVE THE
COLD FEEL OF DEATH!

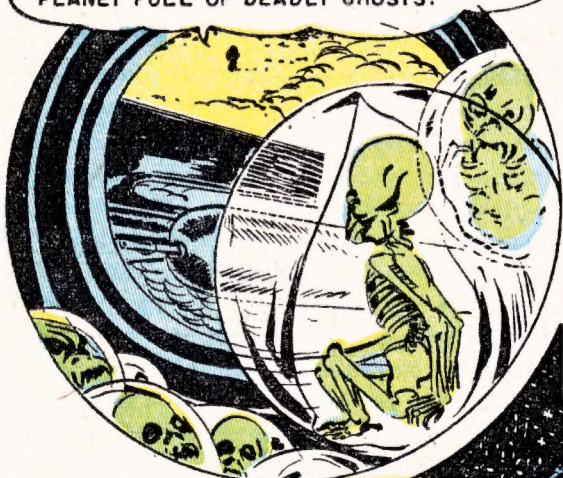
IF THEY EVER
GET LOOSE...
THEY'LL SMOTHER
US ALL!



THIS ROCKET'S AIMED AT THE MOON!



IT WILL CIRCLE THE MOON FOREVER... A ROCKET-
PLANET FULL OF DEADLY GHOSTS!



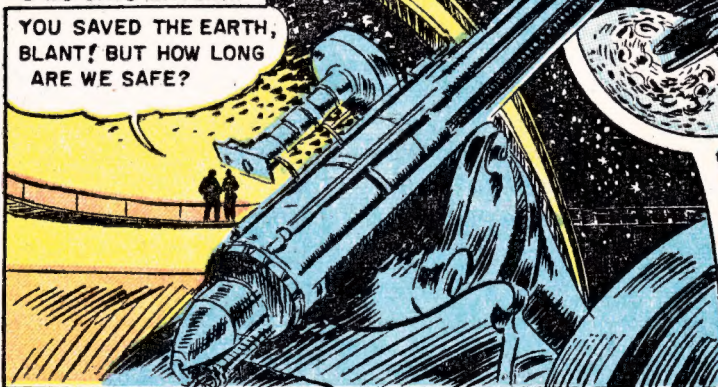
DON BLANT EXPLAINS HIS AMAZING THEORY TO
THE GOVERNOR...

... AND I THINK THE MARTIANS
DROPPED THEM ON US BECAUSE
THESE GHOSTS GOT OUT OF
CONTROL ON MARS!



TWO DAYS LATER...

YOU SAVED THE EARTH,
BLANT! BUT HOW LONG
ARE WE SAFE?



WHO KNOWS? IF THE MARS
FLYING SAUCERS EVER
INVADE US... WITH LIVING
MARTIANS AND GHOSTS...
WHAT CAN
SAVE US
THEN?



DO YOU WANT TO HEAR A STORY, EH? ONE OF THE TERRIFYING TALES FROM MY CASE BOOK OF EVIL! WOULD YOU LIKE TO HEAR ABOUT **GHOULS** OR **VAMPIRES**... OR MAYBE ABOUT THE SWAMP MEN WHO... NO--I'LL SAVE THAT STORY FOR LATER, NOW I'LL TELL YOU A QUIET (CHUCKLE-CHUCKLE-CHUCKLE) STORY ABOUT THE ...

ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR



FEELING TOO WARM? LIKE TO HAVE THOSE COLD FINGERS OF FEAR CRAWL UP AND DOWN YOUR SPINE? THEN COME WITH US TO THE TOMB AND HEAR... **THE GRAVEDIGGER'S TALE**

THERE WAS ALWAYS A FULL ENROLLMENT IN PROFESSOR ANDREW BEAMISH'S COURSES AT THE STATE COLLEGE! HE WAS A GOOD TEACHER WITH A KEEN SENSE OF HUMOR, HIS LECTURES WERE NEVER BORING--AND STUDENTS WHO APPLIED THEMSELVES COULD ALWAYS BE SURE OF A GOOD GRADE...

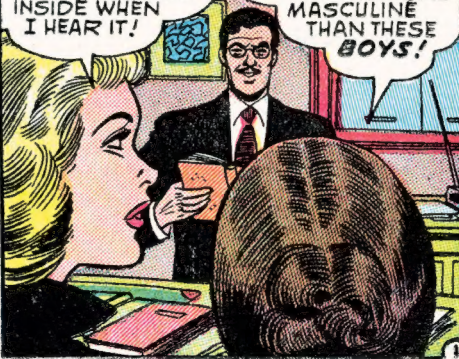
... THE ELECTRON HAS AN AFFINITY FOR THE PROTON, AN ATTRACTION, YOU MIGHT SAY, THAT GIRLS HAVE FOR BOYS!



THE MALE STUDENTS ALL LIKED THE PROFESSOR'S JOKES-- BUT THE GIRLS WERE ATTRACTED FOR DIFFERENT REASONS! THEY WEREN'T INTERESTED IN HIS COURSE... BUT IN HIM...

ISN'T HE JUST THRILLING! HIS VOICE MAKES ME JUST **SHAKE** INSIDE WHEN I HEAR IT!

HE'S THE ONLY **REAL** MAN ON THE CAMPUS! SO MUCH MORE MASCULINE THAN THESE **BOYS!**



ONLY ONE GIRL SEEMED TO BE IMMUNE TO THE PROFESSOR'S CHARMS-- JANICE LLOYD...

THESE GIRLS MAKE ME **SICK** THE WAY THEY SWOON OVER PROFESSOR BEAMISH! IT'S SO UNFAIR! HE'S A WONDERFUL TEACHER...
THAT'S MORE IMPORTANT THAN BEING **HANDSOME!**



AND PERHAPS JANICE WASN'T AS IMMUNE AS SHE LIKED TO BELIEVE, SHE FOUND HERSELF BREATHING A LITTLE FASTER WHENEVER HE CAME NEAR...

KEEP YOUR EYE ON THE GALVINOMETER AND YOU WON'T HAVE ANY TROUBLE!

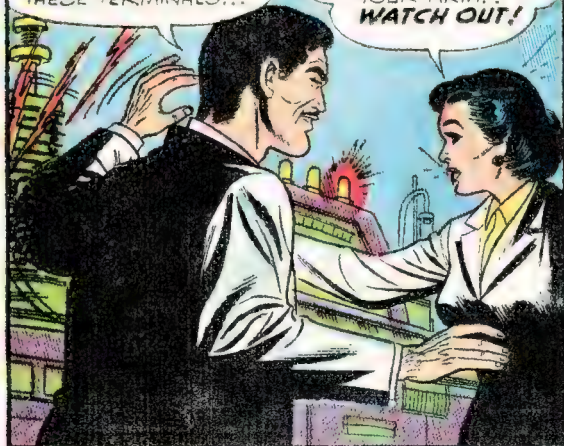
THANK YOU, PROFESSOR, I UNDERSTAND NOW!



ABSORBED IN THE EXPERIMENT, PROFESSOR BEAMISH STEPS BACK...

HAVE YOU CHECKED THESE TERMINALS...

OHH, PROFESSOR, YOUR ARM... WATCH OUT!



JANICE HELD HIS ARM AN INSTANT LONGER THAN WAS NECESSARY... AN INSTANT THEY BOTH SEEMED TO ENJOY...

THANK YOU... MISS LLOYD, IT'S A BAD HABIT OF MINE! I'M RATHER ABSENT MINDED! FOREVER GETTING INTO THINGS WITHOUT KNOWING IT!

YOU'VE RIPPED YOUR SLEEVE-- A SECOND MORE AND IT WOULD HAVE GOT YOUR ARM!



I... I HATE TO ADMIT IT, BUT I'M BEGINNING TO SEE WHY THE OTHER GIRLS ARE SO WILD ABOUT HIM! HE'S SO MATURE-- EVEN A LITTLE ABSENT-MINDED! HE MAKES THE MALE STUDENTS LOOK LIKE CHILDREN!



GOOD EVENING, MISS... ER LLOYD, I SEE WE'RE BOTH GOING IN THE SAME DIRECTION! I HOPE IF YOU DON'T MIND IF I WALK ALONG WITH YOU?

OF COURSE NOT, PROFESSOR, I THINK IT WOULD BE WONDERFUL!

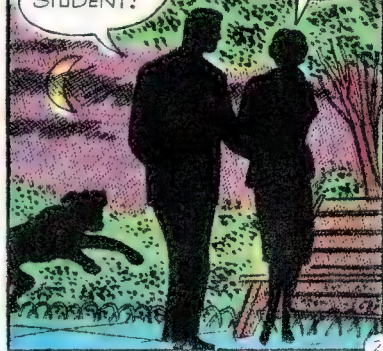
LATER...



JANICE COULD SCARCELY BELIEVE IT, THE COLLEGE PROFESSOR WHO TAUGHT A HUNDRED BEAUTIFUL GIRLS EVERY DAY, SEEMED INTERESTED IN HER...

I'VE ADMIRERD YOUR LABORATORY WORK VERY MUCH, YOU SHOW A GRASP OF PHYSICS PRINCIPLES BEYOND THE AVERAGE STUDENT!

THE CREDIT BELONGS TO YOU, PROFESSOR! YOU TEACH SCIENCE AS IF IT WERE FUN!



THEIR QUIET WALK WAS HORRIBLY INTERRUPTED--A **MAD DOG**... IT SPRANG AT THEM...

OH, NO...
**HELP!
HELP!**

STAND BACK!
I'LL TAKE CARE
OF IT!

GRRRRR!

JANICE SAW THAT THE PROFESSOR WAS A MAN OF ACTION AS WELL AS A MAN OF LETTERS... HE CAREFULLY REACHED FOR THE BEAST'S THROAT...

HE'S GOT
YOUR...
ARM!

IT'S ALRIGHT, JANICE,
I'LL TAKE CARE OF
HIM... HE WON'T
GET NEAR YOU!

SLOWLY, DELIBERATELY... ALMOST ABSENT-MINDEDLY, THE PROFESSOR SINKS HIS FINGERS INTO THE MAD DOG'S THROAT, HIS JAW CLAMPED, HE IGNORES THE ANIMAL'S TERRIBLE BITE...

GRRR...

IN JUST A... MINUTE,
IT WILL BE ALL
OVER...

THE DOG'S GRIP RELAXED... BUT THE PROFESSOR'S NEVER DID...

IT MIGHT BE BETTER IF YOU DIDN'T LOOK...
THIS ISN'T VERY NICE TO
WATCH!

A MOMENT LATER, IT WAS OVER, JANICE COLLAPSED AGAINST THE PROFESSOR'S CHEST...

IT... IT WAS
HORRIBLE!
YOUR POOR
ARM-- YOU
WERE SO
BRAVE TO
DO THAT!

I HAD TO, JANICE! I'D RATHER
HAVE HIM CHEW MY ARM THAN
MY THROAT! DON'T WORRY,
IT'S FINISHED NOW! I'LL GET
THIS ARM ATTENDED TO
AND WE'LL SEE IF WE CAN
FORGET THIS ENTIRE
BUSINESS!

JANICE WAITED, WORRIED, WHILE THE DOCTOR ATTENDED TO THE ARM...

PROFESSOR,
IS... HOW IS
THE ARM?

THE ARM IS FINE--AND MY
NAME IS ANDREW! IF WE
GOING OUT TO DINNER, I
CAN'T HAVE YOU CALLING
ME ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR
ALL NIGHT!

THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF A WHIRLWIND CAMPUS COURTSHIP THAT HAD THE WHOLE COLLEGE BUZZING, JANICE AND THE PROFESSOR SPENT ALL THEIR FREE TIME TOGETHER...

HI, ANDY! HAVE
YOU BEEN WAITING
LONG?

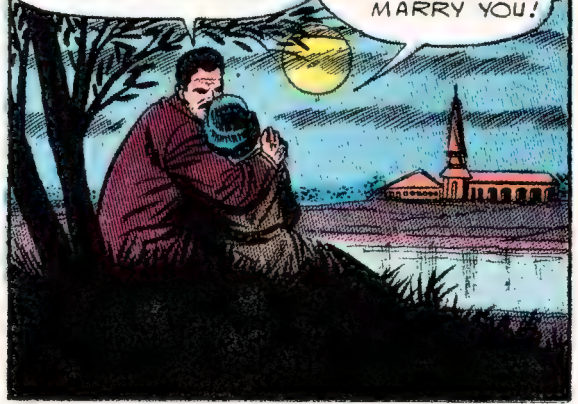
NEVER TOO LONG
FOR YOU... WHAT DO
YOU SAY TO A WALK
BY THE RIVER?

THEY WERE NO LONGER STUDENT AND TEACHER...
THEY WERE NOW-- MAN AND WOMAN! THE
MOON WAS FULL AND THE NIGHT AIR WAS WARM...



JANICE... MY JANICE...
I DON'T KNOW WHY
YOU SHOULD BE IN LOVE
WITH AN OLD MAN, BUT
SINCE YOU ARE, HAVE
YOU EVER CONSIDERED
GETTING... MARRIED?

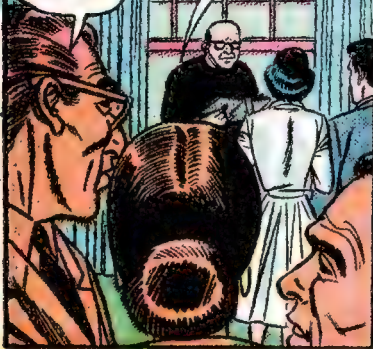
OLD MAN INDEED!
LET'S NOT HEAR
ANOTHER WORD
OF THAT! AND WHY
WERE YOU SO LONG
ABOUT ASKING?
OF COURSE I'LL
MARRY YOU!



A MONTH LATER, THEY WERE
MARRIED! THE ENTIRE FACULTY
CAME TO THE WEDDING, TO
CELEBRATE...AND TO GOSSIP...

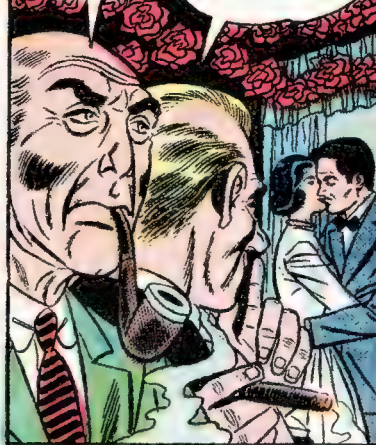
DISGUSTING,
THAT'S WHAT
IT IS! SHE'S
JUST A
CHILD!

I'D HATE TO
TELL YOU HOW
OLD HE IS!



I REMEMBER
THE YEAR HE
CAME HERE,
IT WAS...

HUSH, EMERY!
SOME THINGS
ARE BETTER
OFF NOT
SAID!



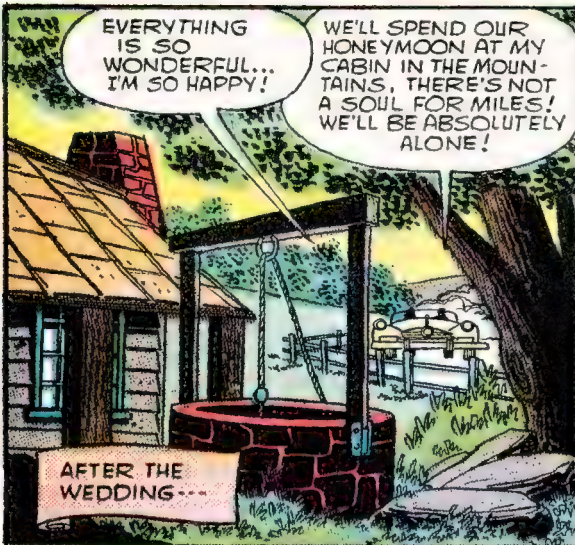
DEAN LEACH,
SHE SHOULD
KNOW ABOUT
ABSENT-MINDED
PROFESSOR
BEAMISH...

TOO LATE FOR
THAT NOW! SHE'LL
HAVE TO FIND
OUT FOR
HERSELF!



EVERYTHING
IS SO
WONDERFUL...
I'M SO HAPPY!

WE'LL SPEND OUR
HONEYMOON AT MY
CABIN IN THE MOUN-
TAINS, THERE'S NOT
A SOUL FOR MILES!
WE'LL BE ABSOLUTELY
ALONE!



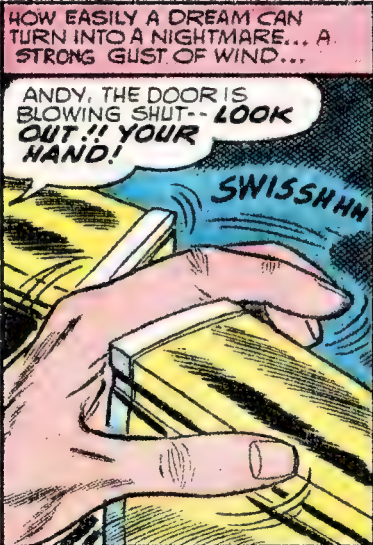
AFTER THE
WEDDING---

THE WEDDING, THE HONEYMOON...NOW THE
MOUNTAIN CABIN! IT WAS ALL SO WONDERFUL,
IT SEEMED LIKE A DREAM TO JANICE...

OH, ANDY... IT'S
BEAUTIFUL! EVERY-
THING SEEMS TOO
GOOD TO BE TRUE!

IT'S TRUE ENOUGH,
DARLING! NOW, LET
ME JUST GRAB
THESE BAGS...





PIECES OF METAL HIT MY ANKLE, JUST ABOUT TOOK IT OFF! I MADE THIS FOOT-- YOU CAN'T REALLY TELL IT FROM THE ORIGINAL!

DID... DID **ANYTHING** ELSE HAPPEN THEN-- TELL ME!

WELL, NO, NOTHING HAPPENED THEN! BUT ABOUT A YEAR LATER YOU KNOW, I REALLY AM ABSENT MINDED, I FORGOT A CARBON-ARC WAS ON! TURNED AROUND TOO FAST AND LOST THIS EYE-- BUT THIS GLASS EYE IS JUST AS GOOD AS REAL!

NO... NO...

VERY HOT FLAME HIT THIS SIDE OF MY FACE, BURNED MY HAIR AND SCALP OFF IN A INSTANT! THIS EAR IS QUITE A GOOD JOB, DON'T YOU THINK? I WASN'T OUT OF THE HOSPITAL A WEEK WHEN A POWER RACK COLLAPSED...

...IT LANDED RIGHT ON MY OTHER ARM-- ONE OF THE METERS POPPED OUT AND LANDED ON MY JAW, LOOKED LIKE ALL MY TEETH WERE ROLLING AROUND ON THE FLOOR LIKE MARBLES!

NO... NO... **NO!!**

BUNDED BY HORROR, JANICE STAGGERED BACKWARDS, FORGETTING ABOUT THE WINDOW THAT OPENED ONTO THE CLIFF...

THEY WANTED TO JUST REPLACE THE MISSING TEETH, BUT I SAID WHY ONLY HALF A JOB, I CAN EASILY MAKE A JAW...

STOP! STOP! AAAIEEEEE!

THE WINDOW FRAME GAVE AND THE TERROR STRICKEN BRIDE PLUNGED TOWARDS THE VALLEY FLOOR...

IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER WHAT YOU LOSE, WITH A LITTLE IMAGINATION YOU CAN EASILY MAKE A PART THAT WILL DO JUST AS WELL, DID YOU SAY SOMETHING, DEAR?

JANICE LAY CRUSHED AND DEAD IN THE VALLEY BELOW, WHILE THE REVOLTING LUMP OF SCARRED FLESH THAT WAS THE ABSENT-MINDED PROFESSOR BEAMISH; SAT ALONE IN THE HONEYMOON CABIN...

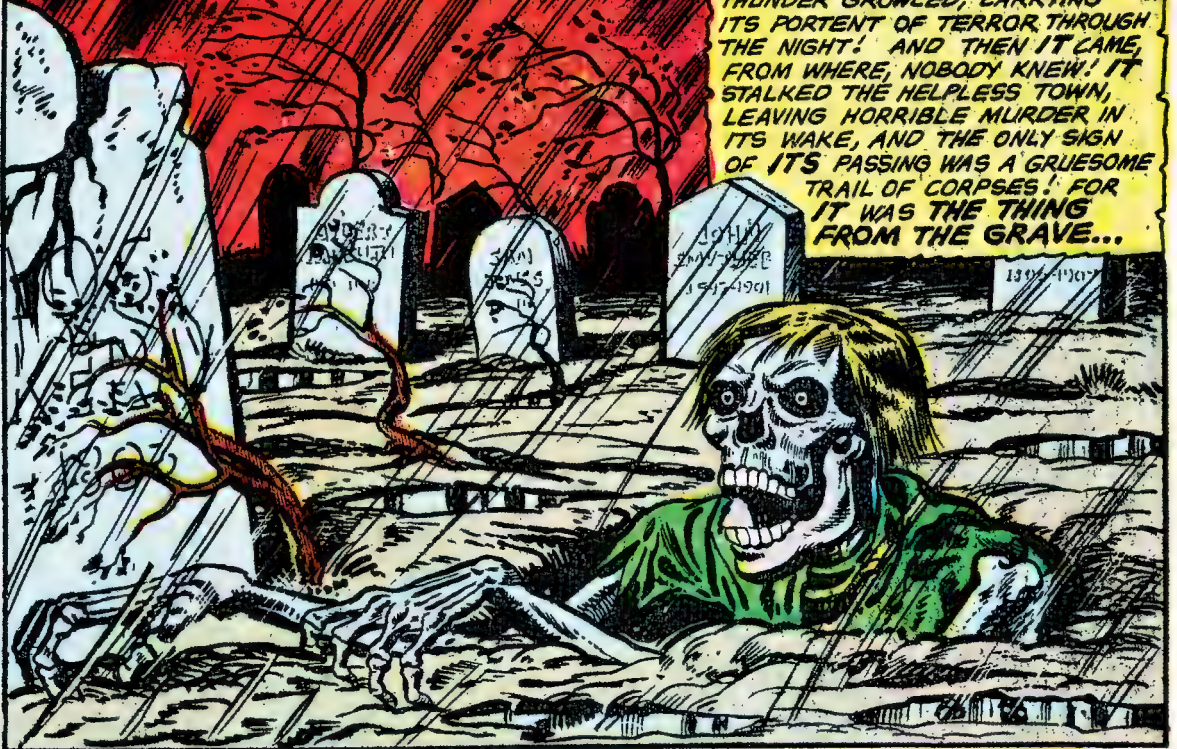
DID YOU SAY SOMETHING? OH DEAR, WHERE DID I PUT THAT EAR... I CAN'T SEE IT! I KNEW I SHOULDN'T HAVE TAKEN BOTH MY EYES OUT AT THE SAME TIME, THAT ALWAYS CAUSES ME SO MUCH TROUBLE!

HEH, HEH, LOOKS LIKE THE GOOD PROFESSOR WENT TO PIECES! THAT POOR GIRL, JANICE, IS BURIED RIGHT HERE IN MY CEMETERY! THE PROFESSOR IS STILL AROUND YET, ALL WE'VE BURIED OF HIM ARE A FEW CHUNKS-- BUT I'LL GET THE REST OF HIM ONE OF THESE DAYS-- THEY ALWAYS COME HERE IN THE END... HEH! HEH!

The END

Return of the Ghoul!

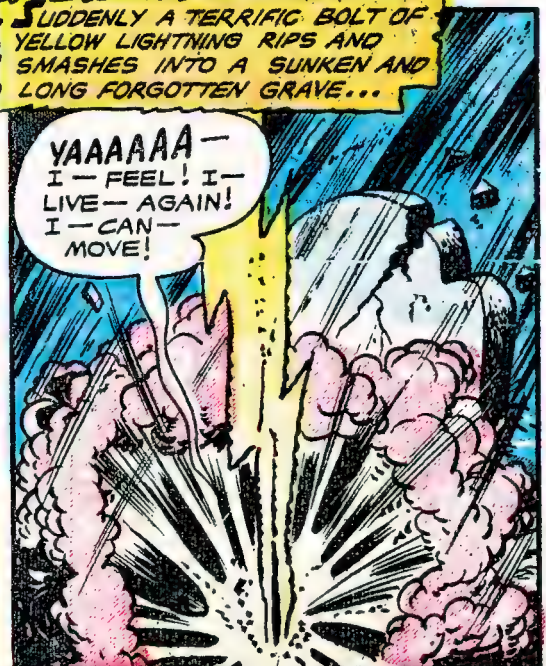
RAIN FELL LIKE SALTLESS TEARS ON THE GRAVES, AND THE WIND WAS BLOWING A DIRGE FOR MOULDERING BONES! THUNDER GROWLED, CARRYING ITS PORTENT OF TERROR THROUGH THE NIGHT! AND THEN IT CAME, FROM WHERE, NOBODY KNEW! IT STALKED THE HELPLESS TOWN, LEAVING HORRIBLE MURDER IN ITS WAKE, AND THE ONLY SIGN OF ITS PASSING WAS A GRUESOME TRAIL OF CORPSES! FOR IT WAS THE THING FROM THE GRAVE...



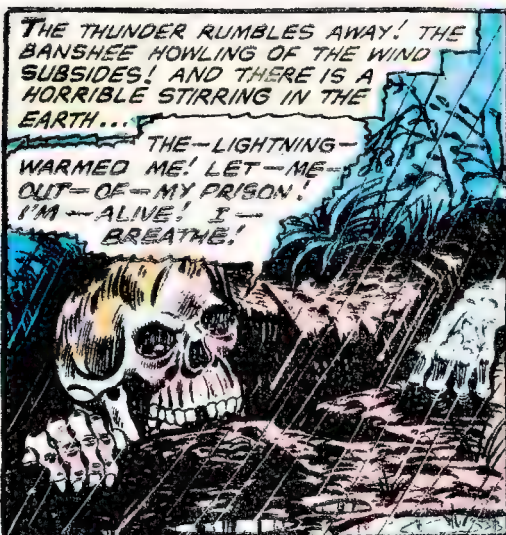
THAT NIGHT A FURIOUS STORM SWEEPED THE LITTLE CEMETERY ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN...



SUDDENLY A TERRIFIC BOLT OF YELLOW LIGHTNING RIPS AND SMASHES INTO A SUNKEN AND LONG FORGOTTEN GRAVE...



YAAAAAA—
I—FEEL! I—
LIVE—AGAIN!
I—CAN—
MOVE!



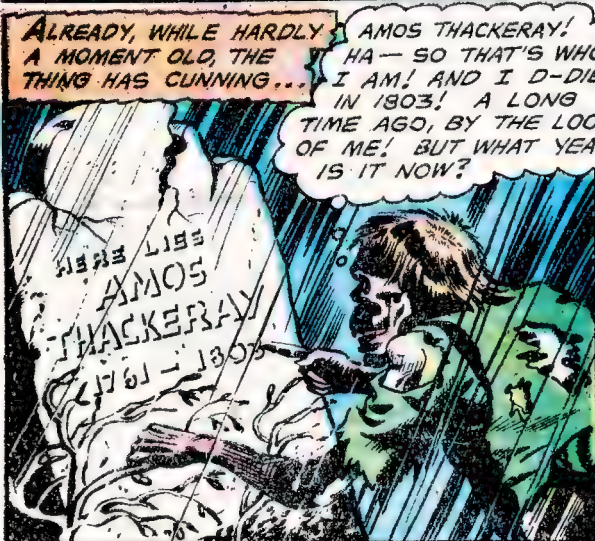
THE THUNDER RUMBLES AWAY! THE BANSHEE HOWLING OF THE WIND SUBSIDES! AND THERE IS A HORRIBLE STIRRING IN THE EARTH...

THE—LIGHTNING—WARMED ME! LET—ME—OUT—OF—MY PRISON! I'M—ALIVE! I—BREATHE!

A HORROR SUCH AS NO MAN HAS EVER SEEN, A THING OF CRUMBLING AND BONES AND TATTERED FLESH, EMERGES FROM THE FOUL GRAVE...

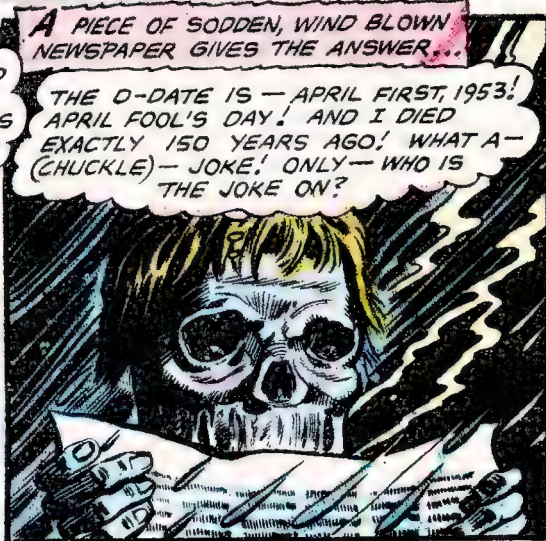


I—I'M BEGINNING TO THINK AGAIN! TO KNOW! B—BUT WHO AM I? WHAT AM I? I—CAN'T SEEM TO REMEMBER...



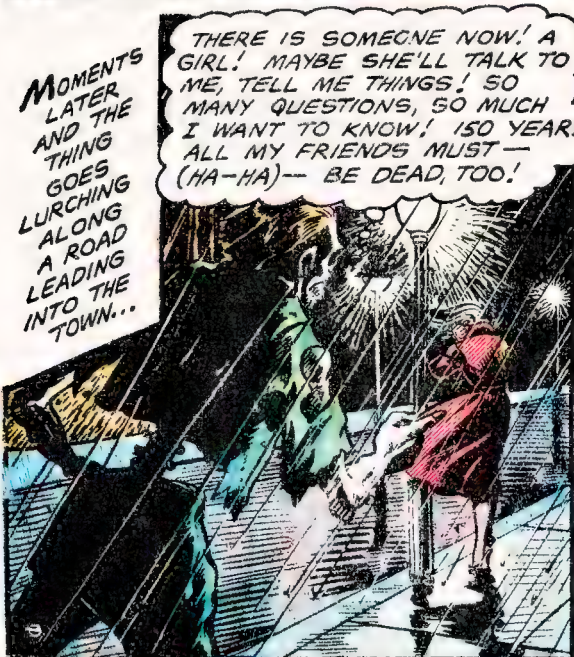
ALREADY, WHILE HARDLY A MOMENT OLD, THE THING HAS CUNNING...

AMOS THACKERAY! HA—SO THAT'S WHO I AM! AND I D-DIED IN 1803! A LONG TIME AGO, BY THE LOOKS OF ME! BUT WHAT YEAR IS IT NOW?



A PIECE OF SODDEN, WIND BLOWN NEWSPAPER GIVES THE ANSWER...

THE D-DATE IS—APRIL FIRST, 1953! APRIL FOOL'S DAY! AND I DIED EXACTLY 150 YEARS AGO! WHAT A—(CHUCKLE)—JOKE! ONLY—WHO IS THE JOKE ON?



MOMENTS LATER AND THE THING GOES LURCHING ALONG A ROAD LEADING INTO THE TOWN...

THERE IS SOMEONE NOW! A GIRL! MAYBE SHE'LL TALK TO ME, TELL ME THINGS! SO MANY QUESTIONS, SO MUCH I WANT TO KNOW! 150 YEARS! ALL MY FRIENDS MUST—(HA—HA)—BE DEAD, TOO!



PLEASE, LADY! DON'T BE FRIGHTENED! I ONLY WANT—

WHAT! OH—EEEEEEEEEEEE—

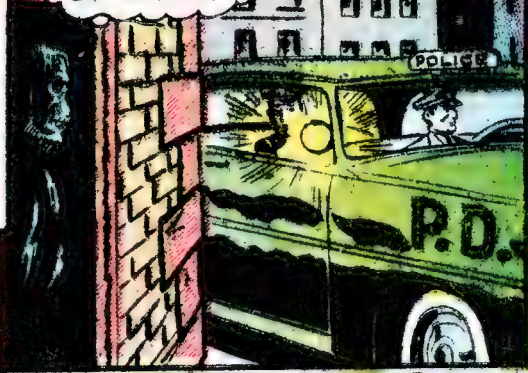
FRIGHTENED, THE THING FLEES IN
TERROR DOWN THE DARK STREETS
OF THE TOWN...

S-SHE WAS AFRAID
OF ME—OF THE WAY I LOOK! I MUST
REMEMBER THAT! EVERYONE WILL BE
AGAINST ME, THEY'LL WANT TO KILL
ME, MAKE ME GO BACK TO MY
GRAVE! BUT I WON'T—

I WON'T!

AS ITS
CUNNING
TURNS TO
FEAR AND
THEN TO
HATRED! IT
SENSES
THAT THE
HAND OF
EVERY
MAN WILL
BE AGAINST
IT, AND
IT IS
PREPARED...

THEY'RE LOOKING FOR ME ALREADY! WHO-
EVER THEY ARE—THEY WANT TO KILL ME!
BUT I'M READY FOR THEM! I'LL
KILL THEM FIRST! THEY
B-BETTER NOT TRY TO
BOTHER ME!

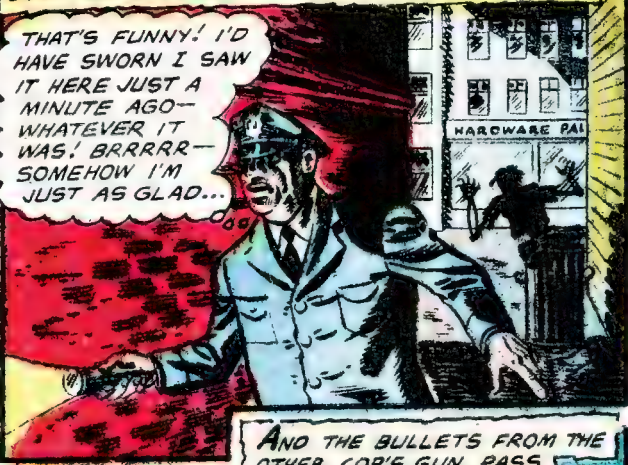


GOOD GRIEF,
MIKE, LOOK AT
THAT! WHAT
IS IT?

DUNNO, BUT IT LOOKS
LIKE IT'S GOT NO
BUSINESS RUNNING
AROUND LOOSE!
C'MON, AND WE'LL
HAVE A CLOSER
LOOK!

THE COPS SEPARATE AND DIVE INTO THE
CLOTTED SHADOWS TO HUNT THE THING DOWN...

THAT'S FUNNY! I'D
HAVE SWORN I SAW
IT HERE JUST A
MINUTE AGO—
WHATEVER IT
WAS! BRRRRR—
SOMEHOW I'M
JUST AS GLAD...



AND THEN...

ARRRRRRR—
I'LL KILL YOU! I
WON'T LET YOU
SEND ME BACK
TO MY
GRAVE!

GREAT DAY IN
THE MORN-
ING, MIKE!
HELP!
GAAAAA—

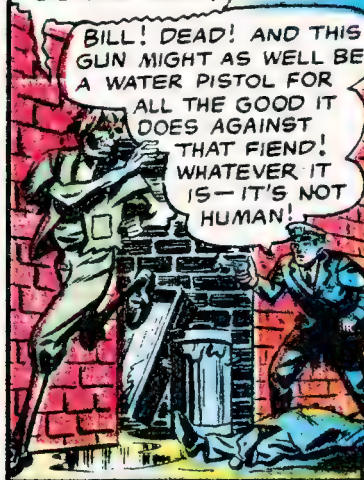
HA-HA!
YOU'LL
NEVER
GET ME
AGAIN!
I'LL RIP
YOU TO
PIECES!
ARRRRR—

AHHHHH—
YIIIIIIII—



AND THE BULLETS FROM THE
OTHER COP'S GUN PASS
THROUGH THE THING
HARMLESSLY...

HA-HA-HA! YOUR BULLETS
CAN'T HURT ME! YOUR KIND
WILL NEVER BE ABLE TO
HURT ME AGAIN! I REMEM-
BER IT ALL NOW! IT'S ALL
COMING BACK!



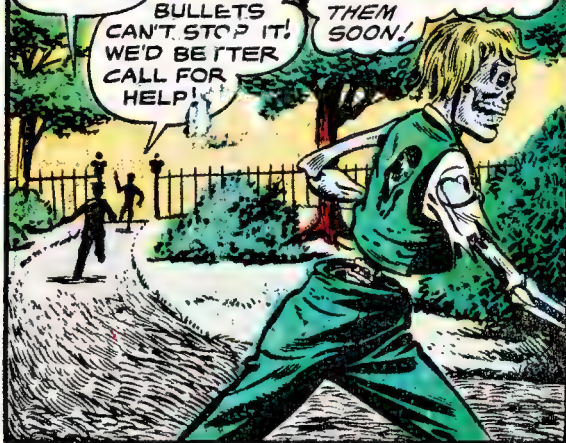
BILL! DEAD! AND THIS
GUN MIGHT AS WELL BE
A WATER PISTOL FOR
ALL THE GOOD IT
DOES AGAINST
THAT FIEND!
WHATEVER IT
IS—IT'S NOT
HUMAN!

PURSUED, THE THING RUNS DOWN BLACK, GLISTENING STREETS, TO A SMALL PARK...

STOP, YOU!
WHATEVER
YOU ARE!

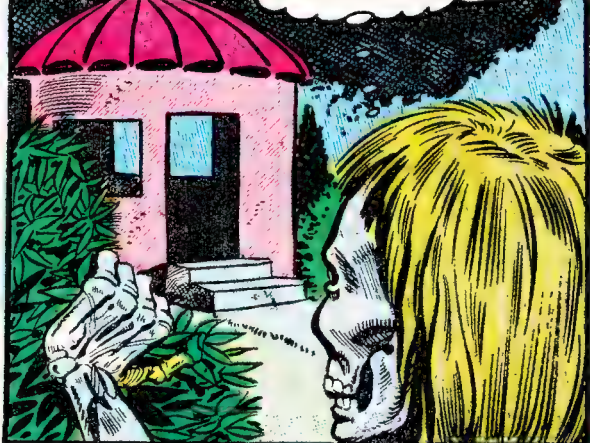
NO USE
SHOOTING,
BILL!
BULLETS
CAN'T STOP IT!
WE'D BETTER
CALL FOR
HELP!

HAH-HAH! FOOLS!
WHAT DO I CARE FOR
THEM! I'LL LOSE
THEM
SOON!



THE CREATURE DOES LOSE THEM, AND...

A SHELTER HOUSE! GOOD! EVEN MY
OLD, DECAYED BONES ACHIE FROM THE
DAMP! MAYBE I CAN STAY HERE FOR
THE NIGHT!



BUT...

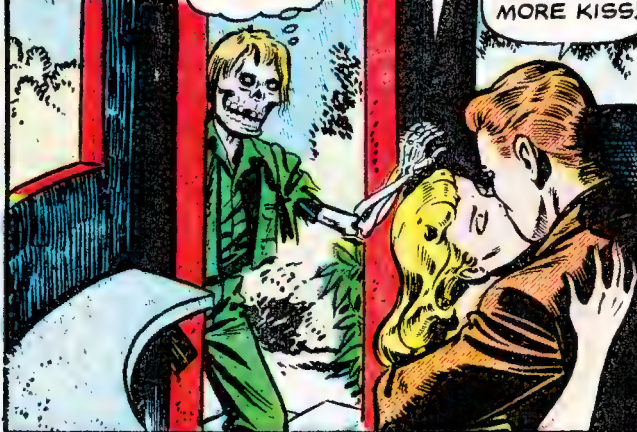
I'LL JUST—OH!
SOMEBODY ELSE IN THERE!
A BOY AND A GIRL—IN
LOVE! I WON'T DISTURB
THEM!

IT'S VERY LATE,
DARLING! I
REALLY
MUST GO
NOW!

IN A
MOMENT,
SWEET!
JUST ONE
MORE KISS!

OVER THE GROTESQUE THING STEALS A
POIGNANT SENSE OF NOSTALGIA...

LOVERS! NOW I REMEMBER—THE
TENDERNESS, THE TOUCH OF A
WOMAN'S LIPS! SO LONG AGO! I'LL
JUST STEAL
AWAY,
AND...



SUDDENLY...

EEEEEEEEEE!
STEVE, LOOK!

GREAT SCOTT!
WHAT IS IT?
S-SOME
KIND OF
FIEND!

N-NO,
PLEASE! I
WON'T HARM
YOU! I'M
GOING NOW!



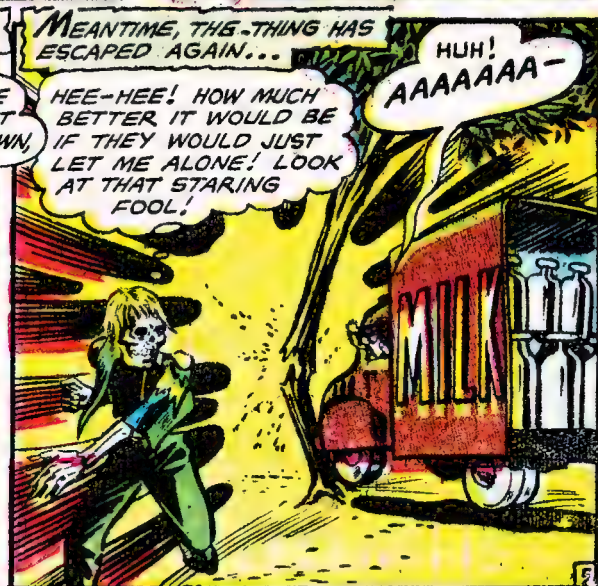
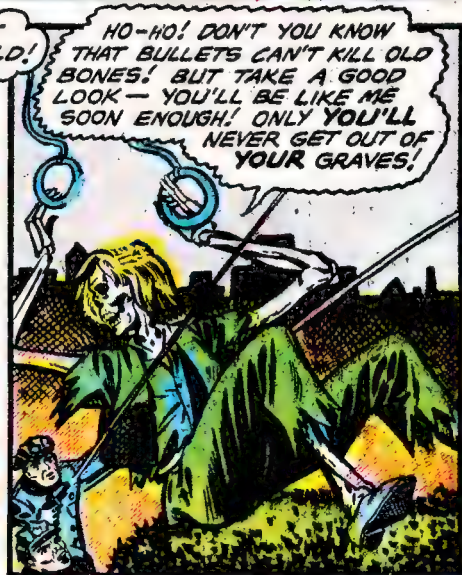
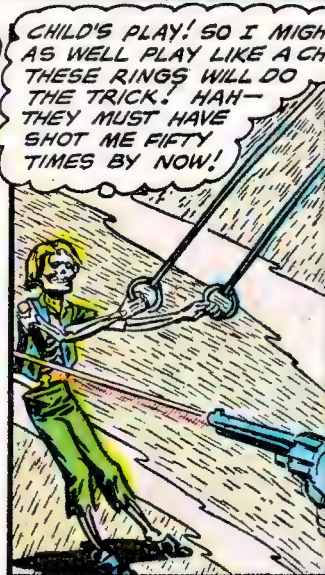
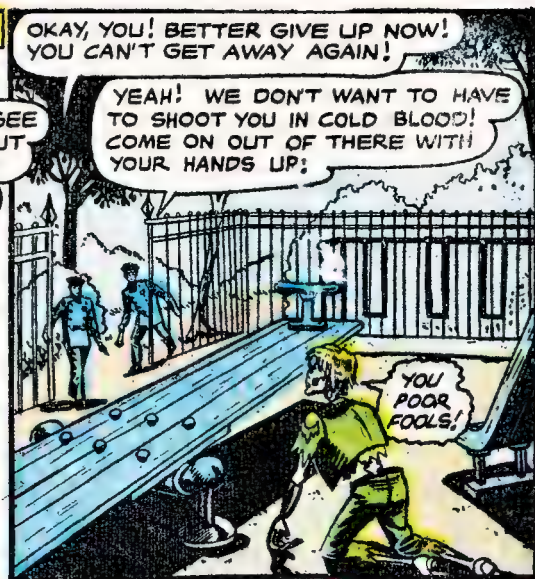
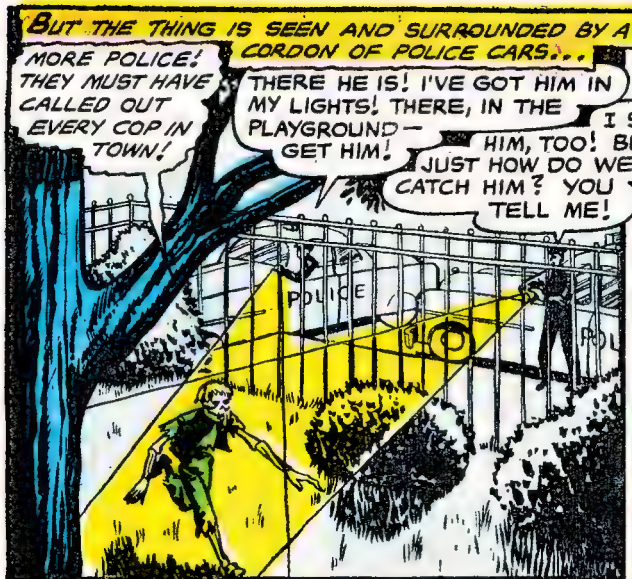
THE POLICE CATCH UP...

MUST BE AROUND
HERE SOMEWHERE!
MAYBE IN THAT
SHELTER HOUSE!

RUN, HONEY! WE
DON'T WANT TO
GET MIXED UP
IN ANYTHING!

LET'S TAKE
A LOOK!



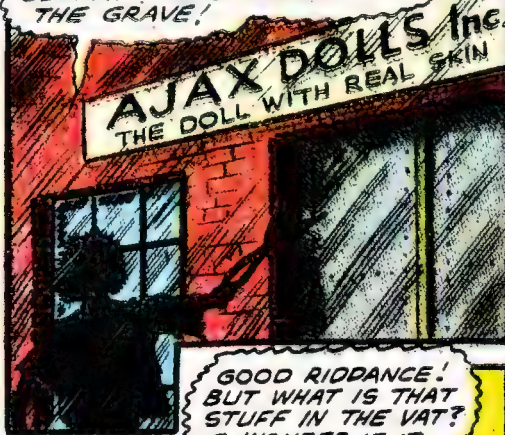


THE THING FROM THE GRAVE, REMEMBERING NOW, WANDERS IN THE STORMY NIGHT...

YES, I REMEMBER IT ALL NOW! I K-KILLED A POLICEMAN A LONG TIME AGO! IN—(CHUCKLE)—1803! THEY PUT ME IN PRISON, BUT I TRIED TO ESCAPE AND THEY SHOT ME! JUST LIKE THEY TRIED TO DO TONIGHT! BUT THE LIGHTNING MADE ME LIVE AND I'M NOT GOING TO LET THEM DO IT AGAIN!



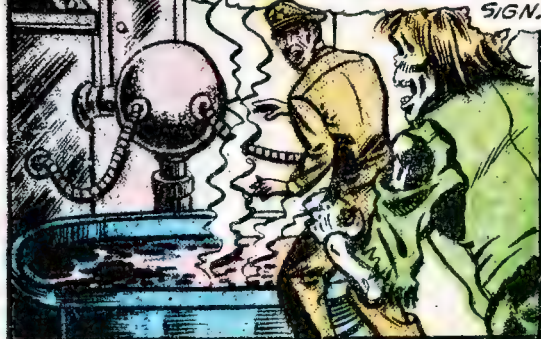
A PLACE WHERE THEY MAKE DOLLS! HMMMM—WAIT A MINUTE! REAL SKIN! IF—IF I HAD REAL SKIN I WOULD LOOK LIKE ANYBODY ELSE! THEY COULDN'T FIND ME THEN, COULDN'T SEND ME BACK TO THE GRAVE!



MOMENTS LATER THE WATCHMAN FOR AJAX HEARS SOMETHING BEHIND HIM! HE TURNS AND...

HUH? W-WHO?
AEEEEEEEE—

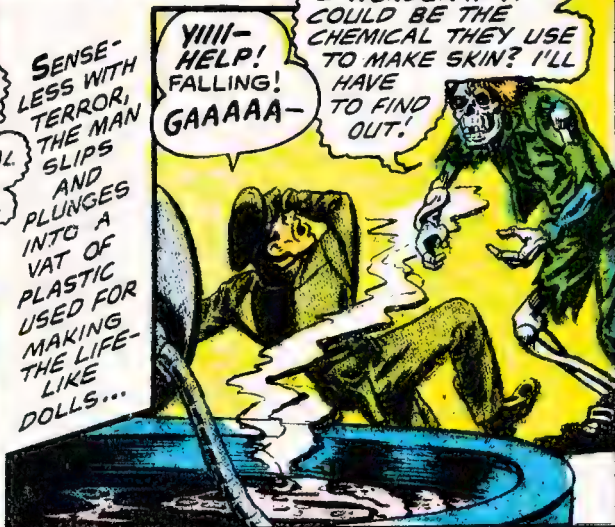
BE QUIET, YOU FOOL!
I DON'T WANT TO HURT YOU! ALL I WANT IS SOME OF YOUR SKIN! REAL SKIN! IT SAYS ON THAT SIGN...



SENSE-
LESS WITH
TERROR,
THE MAN
SLIPS
AND
PLUNGES
INTO A
VAT OF
PLASTIC
USED FOR
MAKING
THE LIFE-
LIKE
DOLLS...

YIII—
HELP!
FALLING!
GAAAAA—

GOOD RIDDANCE!
BUT WHAT IS THAT
STUFF IN THE VAT?
I WONDER IF IT
COULD BE THE
CHEMICAL THEY USE
TO MAKE SKIN! I'LL
HAVE
TO FIND
OUT!



WHEN THE WATCHMAN IS DEAD, THE THING, ITS ROTTED BRAIN STILL SHREWD, GOES TO WORK...

HMMM—THIS MUST BE THE STUFF!
IT'S NOT REAL SKIN, BUT IT MIGHT
DO! SEE HOW IT STICKS TO HIM!
NOW IF I CAN...

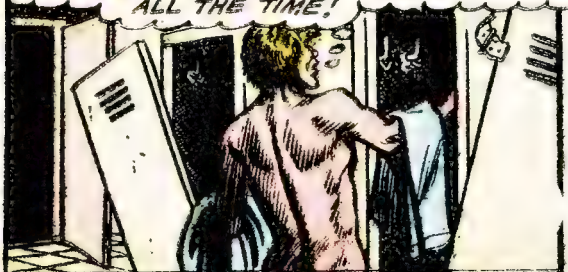


IT DOES... WHOEVER INVENTED THIS ARTIFICIAL SKIN DID ME A REAL FAVOR! IT'S ALMOST AS GOOD AS THE SKIN I ONCE HAD, BEFORE I ROTTED IN THE GRAVE! WHEN I'M FINISHED, I'LL BE SAFE AT LAST!

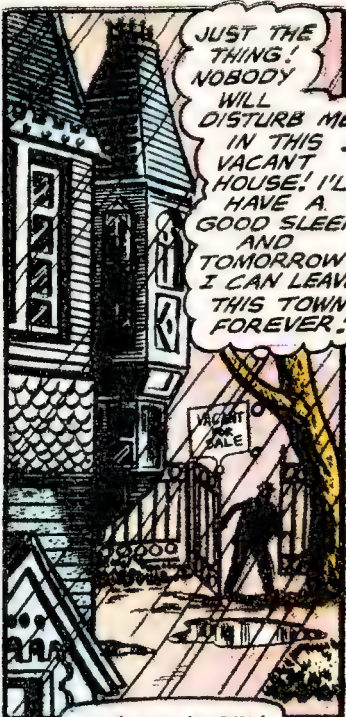


ITS ROTTEN BONES, CLOTHED IN PLASTIC FLESH, THE THING SEARCHES THE FACTORY LOCKERS...

GOOD! NOW THAT I FOUND CLOTHES, I CAN GO WHERE I PLEASE, DO WHAT I WANT TO! I CAN BEGIN TO ENJOY MY NEW LIFE AND MY NEW BODY INSTEAD OF BEING HUNTED ALL THE TIME!



LATER... SUDDENLY I'M VERY TIRED! I CAN HARDLY DRAG MY NEW BODY ALONG! YOU WOULD THINK THAT AFTER 150 YEARS OF SLEEP I WOULD—(YAWN)—NEVER WANT TO SLEEP AGAIN, BUT I—(HO-HUM)—MUST!



JUST THE THING! NOBODY WILL DISTURB ME IN THIS VACANT HOUSE! I'LL HAVE A GOOD SLEEP AND TOMORROW I CAN LEAVE THIS TOWN FOREVER!



THE FURNITURE IS STILL HERE! FINE! THAT MEANS I'LL PROBABLY FIND A COMFORTABLE BED UPSTAIRS! AH, IT WILL BE GOOD TO SLEEP IN A BED AGAIN AFTER SO MANY YEARS IN A GRAVE!

BUT ENTER THE FATE IN THE PERSONS OF MR. AND MRS. HENRY WEST, OWNERS OF THE HOUSE, WHO HAVE BEEN UP TO A LITTLE MISCHIEF OF THEIR OWN...

HENRY! EEEEE!



W-WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

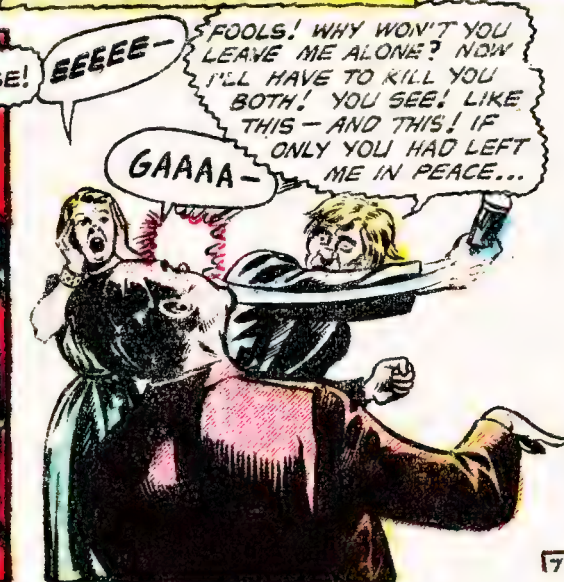
HUH?

BUT AGAIN THE THING IS ATTACKED—AND RAVAGING MURDER BREAKS LOOSE IN ITS LONG DECAYED HEART...



YOU'RE A SPY FROM THE INSURANCE COMPANY! YOU KNOW! BUT YOU'LL NEVER LIVE TO TELL ANYBODY! I'LL KILL YOU!

STAY AWAY! I DON'T WANT TO KILL ANYONE ELSE! KEEP BACK! I WARN YOU!



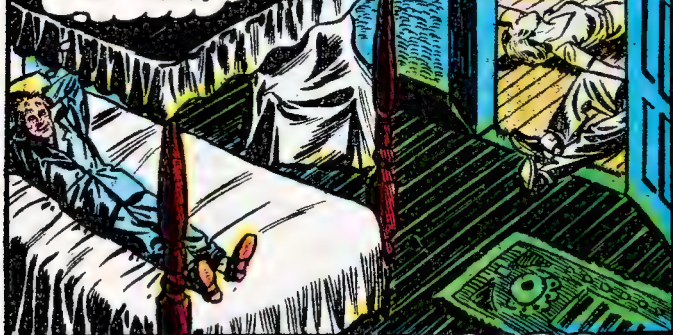
EEEEEE—

FOOLS! WHY WON'T YOU LEAVE ME ALONE? NOW I'LL HAVE TO KILL YOU BOTH! YOU SEE! LIKE THIS—AND THIS! IF ONLY YOU HAD LEFT ME IN PEACE...

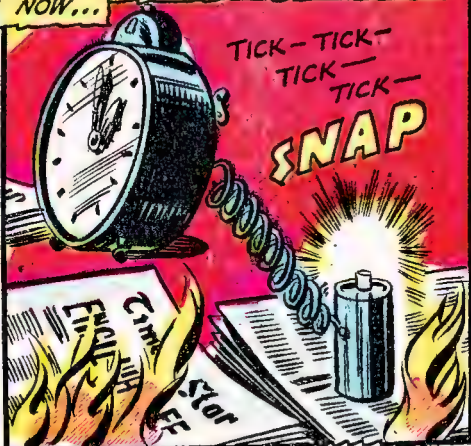
GAAAA—

LATER, AFTER THE FOUL DEED IS DONE, THE WEARY THING FROM THE GRAVE SEEKS REST...

I MUST SLEEP NOW! NO ONE WILL FIND THEIR BODIES UP HERE, AND WHEN I WAKE UP, I'LL BURY THEM IN THE BASEMENT! YES, THE BASEMENT WILL BE THE PLACE!



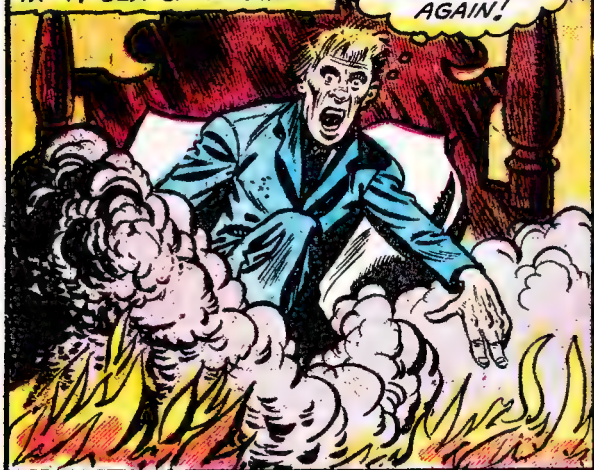
SOME HOURS LATER, IN THE BASEMENT, THE PLAN OF MR. AND MRS. WEST COMES TO FRUITION! THEY HAD SCHEMED TO BURN THEIR HOME FOR THE INSURANCE, AND NOW...



TICK-TICK-
TICK-
TICK-
SNAP

MINUTES PASS AND THEN THE DAZED THING STAGGERS TO ITS FEET IN A SEA OF FLAME...

F-FIRE! THE HOUSE IS BURNING! M-MUST GET OUT! I DON'T WANT TO DIE AGAIN!



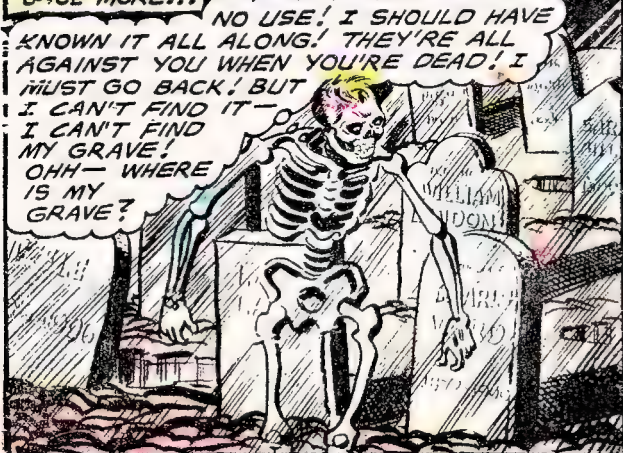
YIIIIIIII - MY NEW SKIN! S-BURNING! I'LL BE DESTROYED!

AHGGGGG-



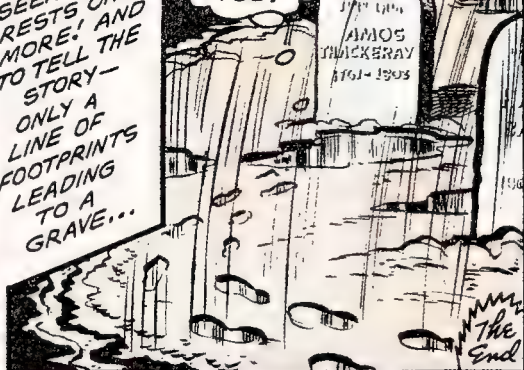
AS THE FIRST FAINT STREAKS OF DAWN APPEAR AND THE STORM BEGINS TO BLOW ITSELF AWAY, A HORRID FIGURE APPROACHES THE CEMETERY ONCE MORE...

NO USE! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN IT ALL ALONG! THEY'RE ALL AGAINST YOU WHEN YOU'RE DEAD! I MUST GO BACK! BUT I CAN'T FIND IT - I CAN'T FIND MY GRAVE! OH - WHERE IS MY GRAVE?



BUT FINALLY THE THING FINDS WHAT IT SEEKS, AND RESTS ONCE MORE! AND TO TELL THE STORY - ONLY A LINE OF FOOTPRINTS LEADING TO A GRAVE...

HEH-HEH-HEH! APRIL FIRST - APRIL FOOL! NOW I KNOW! THE JOKE WAS ON ME ALL THE TIME! YOU CAN NEVER COME BACK, BECAUSE THE LIVING WON'T LET YOU!



The End

FATE IS AN ENIGMA! AND IF NO MAN CAN FORETELL WHAT FATE HAS IN STORE FOR HIM
HOW CAN HE BE EXPECTED TO KNOW WHAT AWAITS HIS VERY CIVILIZATION ITSELF!

THE SURVIVORS!



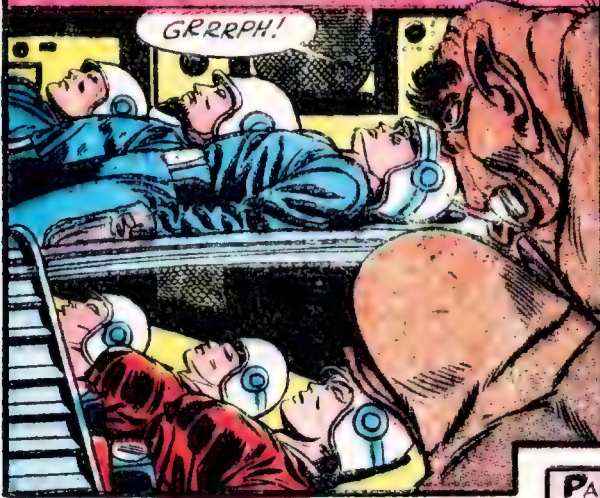
IN A SCORCHED DESOLATION, A NUMBER OF WEIRD,
OMINOUS-LOOKING CREATURES ROAM ABOUT FREELY!



... UNTIL THEY STUMBLE UPON A STRANGE
STEEL DOOR IN A PREVIOUSLY UNEXPLORED
CAVE!

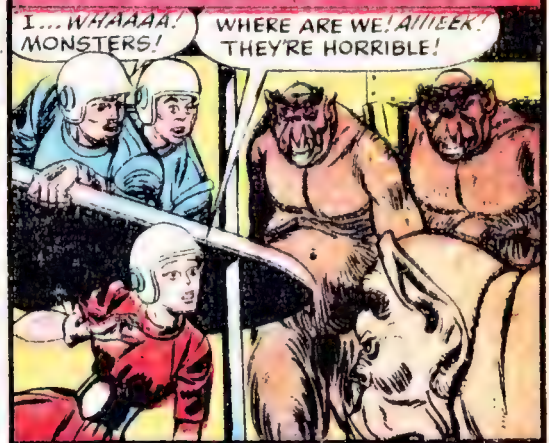


THE STEEL DOOR IS NO MATCH FOR THE MONSTER'S GREAT STRENGTH! AND AFTER SMASHING IT DOWN, THEY ENTER INTO A STRANGE CUBICLE.



GRRRPH!

THE CREATURES REGARD THEIR DISCOVERY WITH QUIET CURIOSITY BUT THE AIR ADMITTED THROUGH THE NOW OPEN DOOR REVIVES THE HUMANS!



I... WHAAAA! MONSTERS!

WHERE ARE WE! AIIIEE! THEY'RE HORRIBLE!

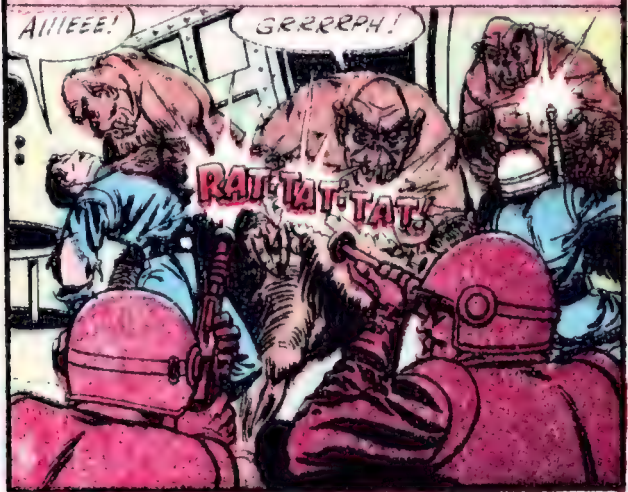
GRAB YOUR GUNS, EVERYBODY! THEY'LL RIP US TO SHREDS!



IT'S THEM OR US!

GRRRPH!

PANIC STRICKEN AT THE SIGHT OF THE GROTESQUE CREATURES, THE HUMANS REACH FOR THEIR WEAPONS! BUT THE MONSTERS, EQUALLY FRIGHTENED, INSTINCTIVELY RETALIATE!



AIIIEE!

GRRRPH!

RAT-TAT-TAT!

AIIIEE! AGGGRRRAA!



GRRRPH!

WE'RE BEATING THEM BACK! KEEP SHOOTING!

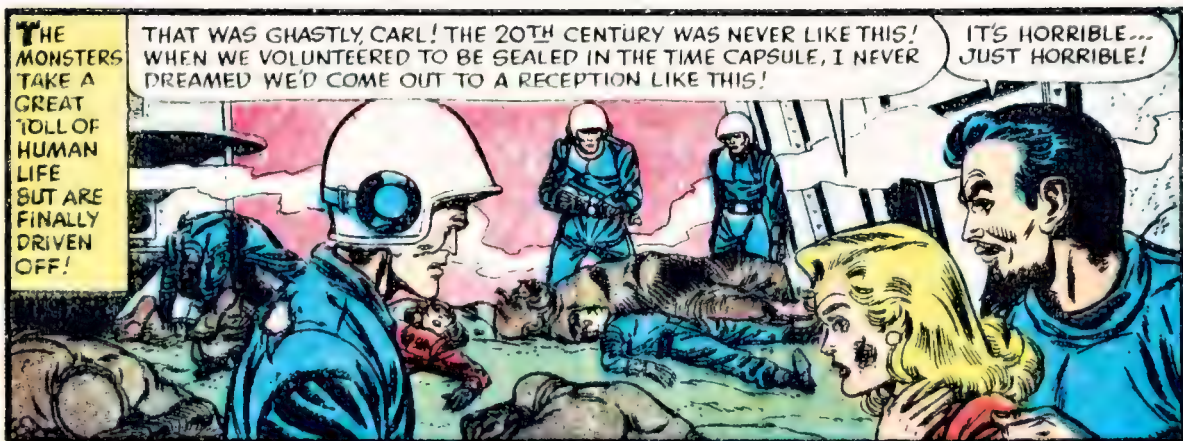


GRRRPH!

AGGGRRRAA!

RAT-TAT

TAT!



THE MONSTERS TAKE A GREAT TOLL OF HUMAN LIFE BUT ARE FINALLY DRIVEN OFF!

THAT WAS GHASTLY, CARL! THE 20TH CENTURY WAS NEVER LIKE THIS! WHEN WE VOLUNTEERED TO BE SEALED IN THE TIME CAPSULE, I NEVER DREAMED WE'D COME OUT TO A RECEPTION LIKE THIS!

IT'S HORRIBLE... JUST HORRIBLE!



TO THINK THAT THIS AREA WAS ONCE NEW YORK! WHAT HAS THE WORLD COME TO!

WE'LL NEVER KNOW UNTIL WE GO ABOVE AND EXPLORE, PROFESSOR!



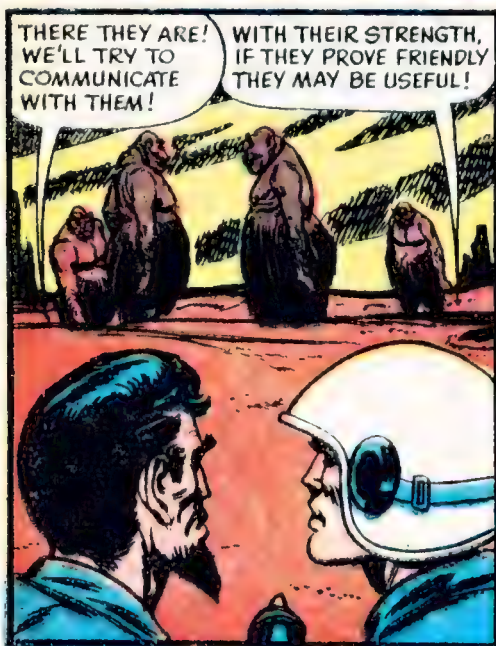
BUT THE MONSTERS...!

WE HAVE TO RISK IT, JAN!



THESE MONSTERS MUST BE THE SURVIVORS OF CIVILIZATION AS WE KNEW IT! A CATASTROPHE MUST HAVE TAKEN PLACE!

RIGHT, PROFESSOR REMEMBER, NO VIOLENCE UNLESS WE'RE ATTACKED!



THERE THEY ARE! WE'LL TRY TO COMMUNICATE WITH THEM!

WITH THEIR STRENGTH, IF THEY PROVE FRIENDLY THEY MAY BE USEFUL!

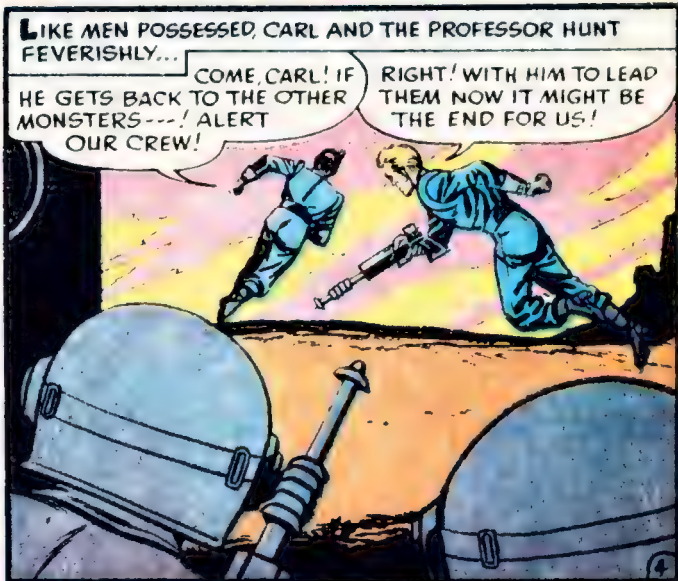


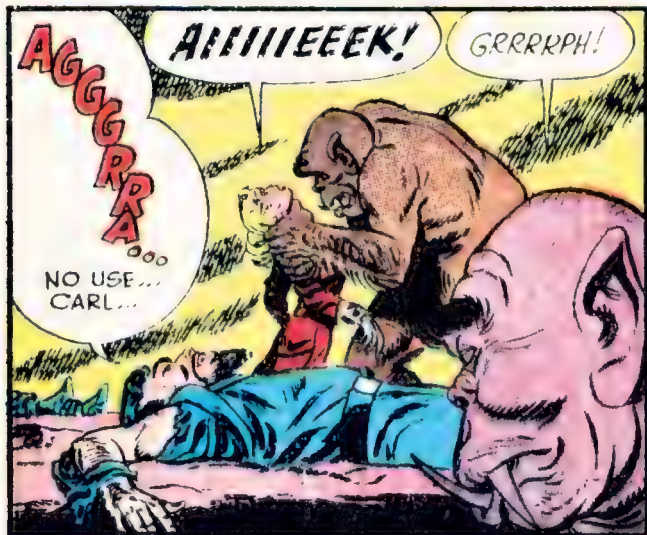
THE CREATURES DO PROVE PEACEFUL AND THE SCIENTISTS ARE SUCCESSFUL IN ENLISTING THEIR AID IN DIGGING OUT THE BUNKER!

THEY WORK LIKE BULLDOZERS, PROFESSOR! THE BUNKER WILL BE CLEAR IN NO TIME!

THEN TO OUR EXPERIMENTS TO FIND OUT WHAT MADE THESE CREATURES WHAT THEY ARE!

GRRRPH!





THE SUPERHUMAN STRENGTH OF THE GHASTLY CREATURES IS TOO MUCH FOR THE OUT-NUMBERED HUMANS AND THE ONLY SURVIVOR OF THE SAVAGE MASSACRE IS CARL!

DEAD! ALL OF THEM! AND I'LL BE NEXT UNLESS I GET BACK TO THE TIME-CAPSULE!

GRRRPH!

THEY'VE SEEN ME!
I'VE GOT TO
MAKE IT!

GRRRPH!

...NOT...
FAR...NOW...!

SLAM!

MADE IT! THEY'LL NEVER
GET ME IN HERE! I'LL
SEAL MYSELF IN THE
CAPSULE AGAIN!

BUT AS THE LONE REMAINING HUMAN SEALS THE TIME-CAPSULE, HE TURNS IN HORROR TO SEE THAT HE IS NOT ALONE!

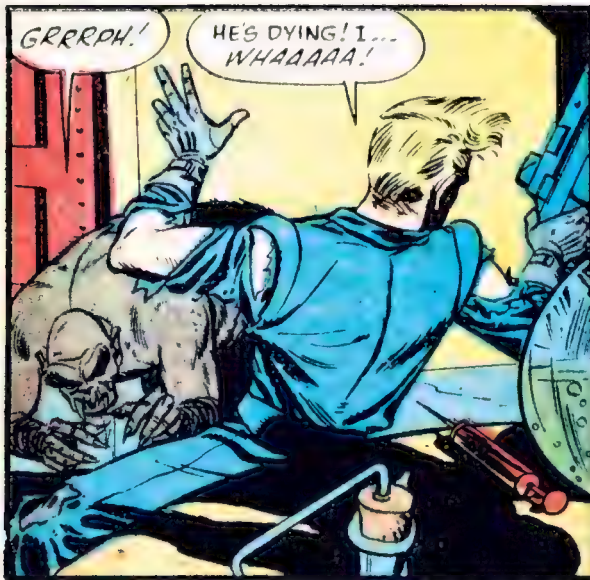
I...WHAAA! THE
MONSTER WE
EXPERIMENTED
ON!

GRRRPH! I...GRRRPH!

DIE,
MONSTER,
DIE!

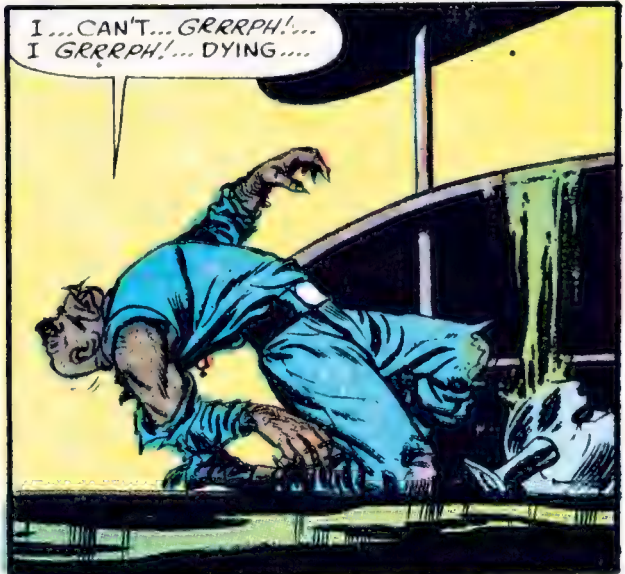
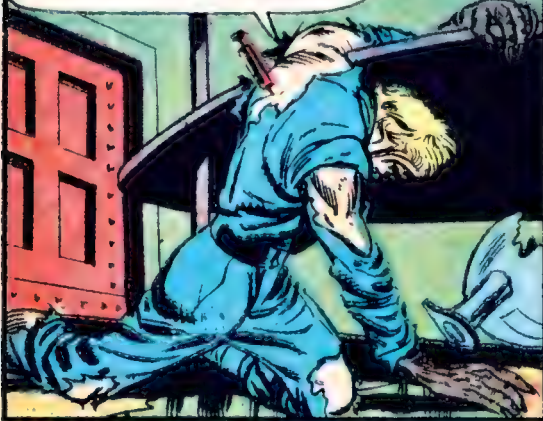
GRRRPH! AGGGRRRAAA!

RAT
TAT
TAT



CARL'S BODY IS PIERCED BY THE INJECTION NEEDLE CONTAINING THE PROFESSOR'S STRANGE SERUM! AND A HIDEOUS TRANSFORMATION BEGINS!

I...CAN'T GET UP...
I...AAAAIEEE... I'M CHANGING!



Arise, O Undead Druids!

BUT I TELL YOU, I'M TRAPPED!
I CAN'T GET OUT TO BRING YOU
MORE SACRIFICES / NO, NO / YOU
PROMISED TO LET
ME LEAVE /

YOU HAVE NOT KEPT YOUR
BARGAIN, VILE CREATURE /
WE CLAIM YOU AS OUR LAST
VICTIM!



WHERE UGLY MINE SHAFTS SINK THEIR WAY INTO THE WELSH COUNTRYSIDE, HONEYCOMBED WITH RICH DEPOSITS OF BLACK GOLD, ONCE THE DREAD, ANCIENT CULT OF DRUIDS PRACTICED THEIR BLOODY RITES. THEIR NAME SPREAD TERROR THROUGH THE LAND WHEN A PERSON VANISHED AMONG THE BROODING HILLS, IT WAS SAID THAT THE DRUIDS HAD TAKEN HIM SWEPT AWAY BY THE MARCH OF CENTURIES, THEIR CULT HAD BEEN THOUGHT EXTINGUISHED, THE MYSTERIES OF THEIR DISAPPEARANCE NEVER SOLVED, UNTIL ONE DAY, WHEN MINE NINETEEN EXPLODED.

I FOUND ROTTEN TIMBERS
AND POCKETS OF GAS!
DO YOU WANT TO HAVE A
DISASTER ON YOUR
HANDS?

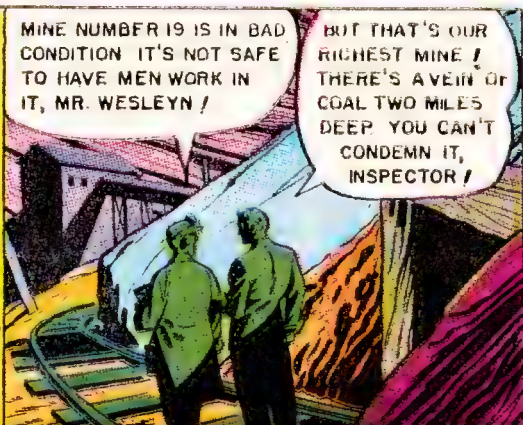
THAT'S
NONSENSE!
I HAD NINE-
TEEN PATCHED
UP LAST WEEK!
COME INTO MY
OFFICE MAYBE
I CAN CONVINCE
YOU!



IT
ALL BEGAN
SHORTLY
AFTER
A
ROUTINE
INSPECTION
OF THE
MINE
HAD
BEEN
COMPLETED.

MINE NUMBER 19 IS IN BAD
CONDITION IT'S NOT SAFE
TO HAVE MEN WORK IN
IT, MR. WESLEYN!

BUT THAT'S OUR
RICHEST MINE!
THERE'S A VEIN OF
COAL TWO MILES
DEEP YOU CAN'T
CONDEMN IT,
INSPECTOR!



EVERY MAN, THOUGHT FOREMAN WESLEYN, HAS HIS PRICE. THE MINE INSPECTOR'S BRIBE RAN HIGH...

WHEN THE INSPECTOR LEFT...

YOU'RE NO JUDGE OF THAT! I'VE HAD THE MINE INSPECTED! IT'S BEEN PASSED! I'LL SHOW YOU THE REPORT!

TWO HUNDRED POUNDS SHOULD MAKE THOSE TIMBERS SOUND, AND CLEAR OUT THE GAS! REMEMBER, I'VE GOT A JOB TO HOLD DOWN, TOO!

MAYBE I WAS HASTY ABOUT CONDEMNING THE MINE! DON'T WORRY, MY REPORT WILL KEEP NINETEEN IN OPERATION!

WE'RE NOT GOING DOWN INTO THAT HELLHOLE NUMBER NINETEEN! IT ISN'T SAFE!



THERE YOU ARE! A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH! BUT IF YOU DON'T WANT TO WORK, I'LL GET ANOTHER CREW!

THE INSPECTOR MUST HAVE BEEN BLIND! WE'LL WORK, BUT IF ANYTHING GOES WRONG, WE'LL CLOSE THE SHAFT OURSELVES.

A FEW DAYS LATER, SEVERAL HUNDRED FEET BELOW THE SURFACE...

THE GAS GETS THICKER EVERY HOUR! HOW LONG ARE WE GONNA WORK THIS ROTTEN MINE.

WHEN WE FINISH THIS SHIFT, I'M GONNA SHUT HER DOWN. IF WESLEYN WANTS COAL, HE'LL HAVE TO DIG IT HIMSELF UNTIL THE MINE IS MADE SAFE!



WITHOUT WARNING, THE TIMBERS BEGAN TO GO...

BACK, MEN! HEAD FOR THE SHAFT! THE WALLS ARE BUCKLING!

EEEEYAA, WE'LL BE TRAPPED!



A SPARK FLEW FROM A DROPPED PICKAXE. THE VOLATILE GASES EXPLODED IN SHEETS OF FLAME...

YIIIIII! OUT OF MY WAY! LET ME OUT!

HEELLP! I CAN'T MOVE! GET THIS BEAM OFF MY BACK!





SIRENS BLASTED THE AIR ABOVE THE PIT . . .

CALL OUT THE RESCUE GANG / THERE'S THIRTY-FIVE MEN IN THAT PIT /

FAT CHANCE THEY HAVE OF GETTING OUT ALIVE / THE PIT SHOULD HAVE BEEN CLOSED / IT'S BECOME A DEATH TRAP /



OUR TOMB HAS BEEN OPENED / OOOLAG /

NRAI / NOW WE CAN EXPLORE OUR UNDERGROUND WORLD AGAIN /



THESE ARE MEN FROM THE OUTER WORLD / THOSE WHO IMPRISONED US BELOW, CENTURIES AGO /

TAKE THEM BACK TO OUR SACRED CAVERN. WE WILL SACRIFICE THEM TO MALGOB, OUR GOD OF FLAME /



WAIT, BROTHERS, I SEE ANOTHER AND HE IS STILL ALIVE /

MALGOB WILL BE PLEASED / WE WILL KEEP THIS ONE FOR A SPECIAL SACRIFICE /



GREAT IS MALGOB / LIGHT FIRES TO PRAISE HIS SACRED NAME /

STAY AWAY FROM ME, YOU FIEND OF THE DEVIL /

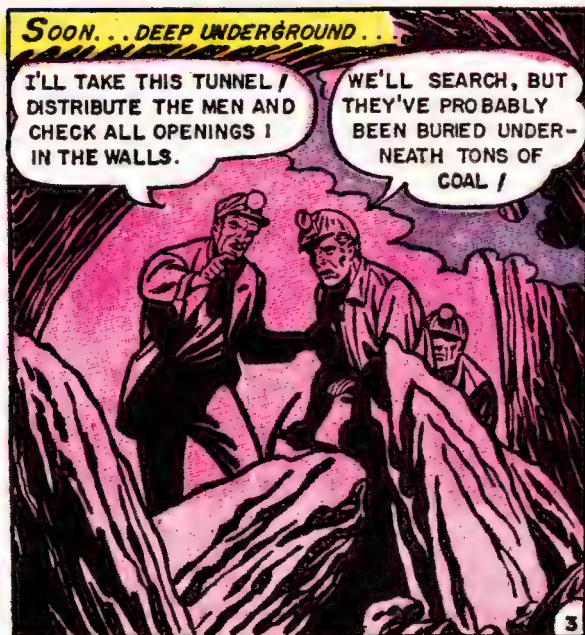
SO, YOU ARE TRAPPED / I COULD KILL YOU WITH A BLOW, BUT YOU WILL KEEP / WE HAVE OTHER PLANS FOR YOU /

WHEN THE RESCUE PARTY RETURNED TO THE SURFACE . . .



COUNT 'EM / THIRTY RECOVERED OUT OF THIRTY-FIVE, ALL DEAD / YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS, WESLEYN, AND YOU'RE COMING DOWN WITH US TO FIND THE REST OR WE'LL CARRY YOU DOWN /

I- IT WASN'T MY FAULT / ALL RIGHT, I'LL GO DOWN WITH YOU /



SOON . . . DEEP UNDERGROUND . . .

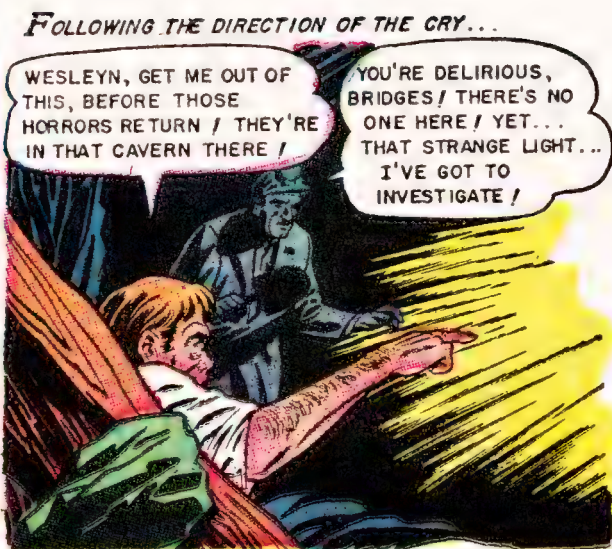
I'LL TAKE THIS TUNNEL / DISTRIBUTE THE MEN AND CHECK ALL OPENINGS / IN THE WALLS.

WE'LL SEARCH, BUT THEY'VE PROBABLY BEEN BURIED UNDER NEATH TONS OF COAL /



I'VE NEVER SEEN THIS TUNNEL BEFORE. IT'S NOT PART OF THE MINE / UH — WHAT WAS THAT ?

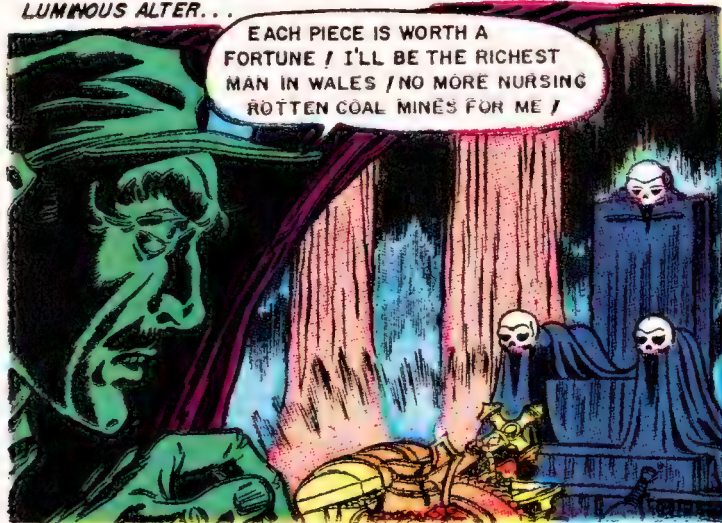
AAAAIII...
HELP!



WESLEYN, GET ME OUT OF THIS, BEFORE THOSE HORRORS RETURN / THEY'RE IN THAT CAVERN THERE /

YOU'RE DELIRIOUS, BRIDGES! THERE'S NO ONE HERE / YET... THAT STRANGE LIGHT... I'VE GOT TO INVESTIGATE /

Wesley's eyes bulged with greed as they fixed on the luminous alter...



EACH PIECE IS WORTH A FORTUNE / I'LL BE THE RICHEST MAN IN WALES / NO MORE NURSING ROTTEN COAL MINES FOR ME /



HELP ME! DON'T LEAVE ME HERE TO DIE!

I'LL LET HIM ROT BENEATH

THAT BEAM / THIS IS ONE SECRET I WON'T SHARE WITH ANYONE / TOMORROW NIGHT I'LL COME BACK ALONE AND TAKE MY PICK OF THE TREASURE /



YOU'RE OUT OF LUCK, BRIDGES / I FOUND SOMETHING IN THERE I WON'T SHARE WITH ANYONE. YOU'VE GOT TO DIE /

YOU'RE COMING WITH ME, WESLEYN! THE HORRORS ARE BACK / LOOK BEHIND YOU!



YIII! / WHA... WHAT KIND OF BEAST IS THAT?

ANOTHER SACRIFICE FOR MALGOB / HA / HA / HA /

STAND STILL, MORTAL CREATURE / THERE IS NO ESCAPE FROM THE DRUIDS /



WESLEYN'S TERROR GAVE WAY TO DESPERATION...

YOU HAVEN'T GOT ME YET, MONSTER!

AAAAEEEEEE!!

MAY MALGOB CURSE HIM! HE TRICKED ME!

WE STILL HAVE THE OTHER, OOLAG! AND ONCE WE GET TO THE SURFACE WE SHALL NOT LACK SACRIFICES!

PANTING, WESLEYN REACHED THE END OF THE TUNNEL OF HORROR...

YOU LOOK AS IF YOU'D SEEN A GHOST! DID YOU FIND ANYONE?

N-NO, THE TUNNEL'S EMPTY! IT ENDS IN A BLANK WALL OF ROCK. WE'LL HAVE TO RENEW OUR SEARCH TOMORROW!

ON THE SURFACE ONCE MORE...

AND YOU'D BETTER SHOW UP, WESLEYN, OR THERE'LL BE TROUBLE!

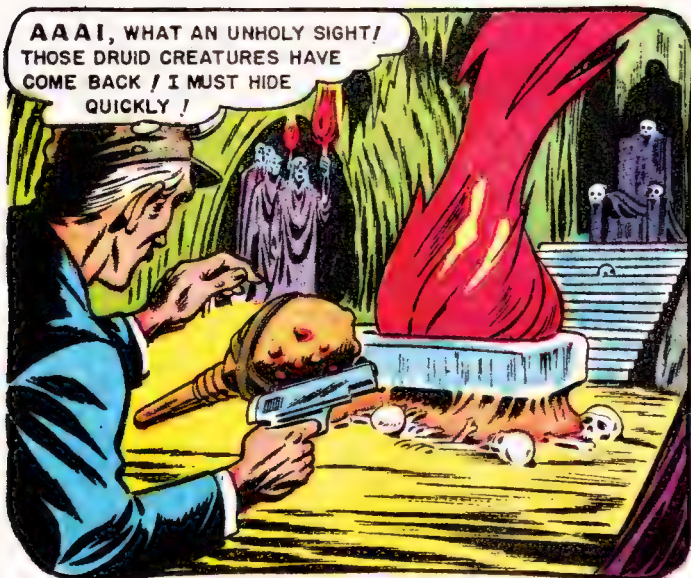
STUPID FOOLS! I'LL BE IN THE MINE TONIGHT, WHEN NO ONE'S AROUND! SOMEHOW I'LL TRICK THOSE MONSTERS AND GET MY HANDS ON THAT TREASURE.

AS NIGHT FELL...

WHOEVER THOSE CREATURES ARE, A SLUG FROM A FORTY-FIVE SHOULD KEEP THEM AWAY!

NO ONE'S AROUND, BUT IT LOOKS LIKE THEY GOT BRIDGES! SAVES ME THE TROUBLE OF PUTTING HIM OUT OF HIS MISERY! NOW TO GET TO THAT CAVE!

IF I TAKE ONE OF THE CLUBS, I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO CARRY ANYTHING ELSE. BUT THEY'RE SOLID GOLD! IT'S ENOUGH FOR THE FIRST TRIP!



AAA! WHAT AN UNHOLY SIGHT!
THOSE DRUID CREATURES HAVE
COME BACK / I MUST HIDE
QUICKLY !



MALGOB BE PRAISED !
LIGHT THE SACRED
COAL TREES FOR
OUR SACRIFICES !

HANG, BRUT
GAR GAR E
BI BIERNESS/
MALGOB/
MALGOB !

FIRE SACRIFICES, JUST LIKE
TWO THOUSAND YEARS AGO !
WORSHIPPING THEIR SACRED
GOD, MALGOB / IT DOESN'T
SEEM REAL, YET HERE I
AM, WATCHING THIS
NIGHTMARE !



BURN ! BURN !
EVERLASTING FIRE CONSUME
YOUR FLESH !

GREAT IS MALGOB / GLORY TO OUR
FLAMING GOD MALGOB !



As the flames reached their
greatest height, the cavern
grew bright as day. Wesley
no longer was hidden. . .



LOOK BROTHERS, THE INTRUDER
FROM THE OUTER WORLD !
SEIZE HIM / DON'T LET
HIM ESCAPE AGAIN !

THEY'RE INHUMAN ! THE BULLETS
HAVE NO EFFECT ON THEM !
I'M TRAPPED ! TRAPPED BY
THESE MAD FIRE-WORSHIPPING
BEASTS !



BANG!
BANG!

NO ! NO ! LET ME LIVE !
LISTEN TO ME !



WAIT / DO NOT
KILL HIM ! LET HIM
SPEAK ! BRING HIM
BEFORE OUR HIGH
PRIEST !

THESE SACRED CEREMONIES WERE NOT MEANT FOR YOUR EYES. YOUR SOUL MUST BE EXORCISED LIKE THE OTHERS!

WAIT! IF YOU NEED MORE SACRIFICES FOR YOUR GOD, I CAN BRING THEM TO YOU! I HAVE POWER IN THE OUTER WORLD. I WILL LEAD A HOST OF MEN TO YOUR SACRED CAVERN!



MORE SACRIFICES? YOU HAVE WON MY INTEREST! THE HIGH COUNCIL WILL MEET TO DECIDE WHETHER OR NOT YOU SHALL LIVE.

ANY NUMBER YOU WANT! DEAD I AM OF NO USE TO YOU!



MEANWHILE AT THE MOUTH OF THE MINE, HUNDREDS OF FEET ABOVE THEM...

WE'VE WAITED TWO HOURS FOR WESLEYN! HE'S RUN OUT ON US, THE DIRTY COWARD. NOW WE'LL BLAST THIS DEATH TRAP SO THEY'LL NEVER GET ANOTHER SHOVEL OF COAL OUT OF IT!

WE'VE SEARCHED HIS HOUSE! HE'S GONE! GO AHEAD AND BLAST THE ROTTEN MINE!



THE DRUID HIGH COUNCIL HAD DECIDED...

YOU ARE FREE TO GO, AND AS A TOKEN OF OUR BARGAIN, I GIVE YOU THIS CLUB OF GOLD! THE MORE SACRIFICES YOU BRING, THE RICHER SHALL BE OUR GIFTS!

I THANK YOU, AND THE BARGAIN WILL BE KEPT!

I'LL NEVER RETURN TO THIS UNDERWORLD HELL AGAIN!



BUT WESLEYN HAD BARELY REACHED THE CAVERN OPENING WHEN SUDDENLY...



ANOTHER BLAST! THE WALL'S CAVING IN! I'LL BE TRAPPED!

NO, NO! IT WASN'T MY FAULT! I—I DIDN'T CAUSE THE EXPLOSION!

YOU CANNOT KEEP THE BARGAIN NOW! THE CAVERN IS SEALED FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD AGAIN! YOU ARE OUR LAST SACRIFICE!



WESLEYN'S SCREAMS MOUNTED AS HIGH AS THE FLAMES... BUT ONLY THE DRUIDS HEARD...

GREAT IS MALGOB! MALGOB BE PRAISED!





WHAT GOES
AROUND, COMES
AROUND. JUST MAKE
SURE IT DOESN'T BITE
YOU IN THE TAIL! YOU
MIGHT FIND YOURSELF
TURNED INTO... WELL,
I'LL LET YOU DISCOVER
THAT FOR YOURSELF,
BUT DON'T TELL ME
YOU WEREN'T
WARNED!!!

HORROR-GO-ROUND

THE KINDLY OLD MAN HAD A UNIQUE IDEA FOR ENTERTAINING THE NEIGHBORHOOD CHILDREN! FOR HIS WAS NOT A CONVENTIONAL CAROUSEL--- NOT BY A LONG SHOT! WHEN YOU PAID YOUR DIME FOR A RIDE ON THE HORROR-GO-ROUND, YOU RODE WITH CREATURES WHOSE TWISTED, DEFORMED NATURES COULD HAVE BEEN SPAWNED ONLY IN THE LOWEST DEPTHS OF THE INFERNO!

ONLY TEN CENTS A RIDE!
WON'T YOU COME ABOARD?

HORROR
ROUND



ROBERT AND KENNETH GRAHAM WERE CLOSE, EVEN FOR BROTHERS! THEY SPENT EVERY POSSIBLE MOMENT IN EACH OTHER'S COMPANY! AND SO IT HAPPENED THAT, ONE DAY...

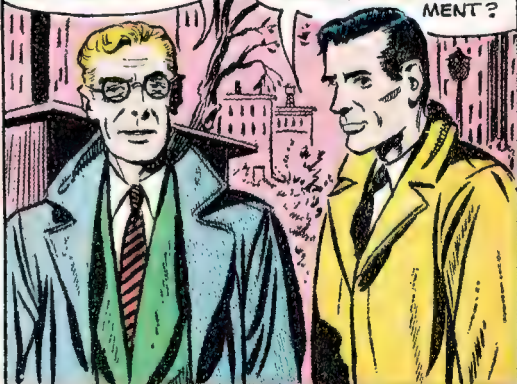
WHAT A GRISLY IDEA OF ENTERTAINMENT! THOSE-THOSE MONSTERS LOOK ALMOST REAL!

I AGREE, ROBERT! BUT THE CHILDREN DON'T SEEM TO MIND!



IN FACT, THEY SEEM TO BE ENJOYING THEMSELVES! I GUESS THEY DON'T REACT TO THE GROTESQUE AND HORRIBLE THE WAY WE DO.

YOU'RE RIGHT, KENNETH! I WONDER WHAT SORT OF PERSON CREATED THIS NIGHTMARE TYPE OF AMUSEMENT?



I HOPE YOU'RE NOT IMPLYING HE LOOKS LIKE ONE OF THOSE CREATURES!

UGH! NO HUMAN BEING COULD LOOK LIKE THAT!



KENNETH AND ROBERT, LIKE THE KINDRED SOULS THEY WERE, BEGAN TO FANCY THEY DID SEE SOME RESEMBLANCE TO PEOPLE THEY KNEW!

SAY! DOESN'T THAT LOOK LIKE OLD JEREMY WIGGINS WHO WAS KILLED IN AN AUTO CRASH LAST WEEK?

IT DOES AT THAT, KENNETH!



I SEE YOU'RE ADMIRING MY CREATIONS, GENTLEMEN! UNUSUAL, AREN'T THEY?

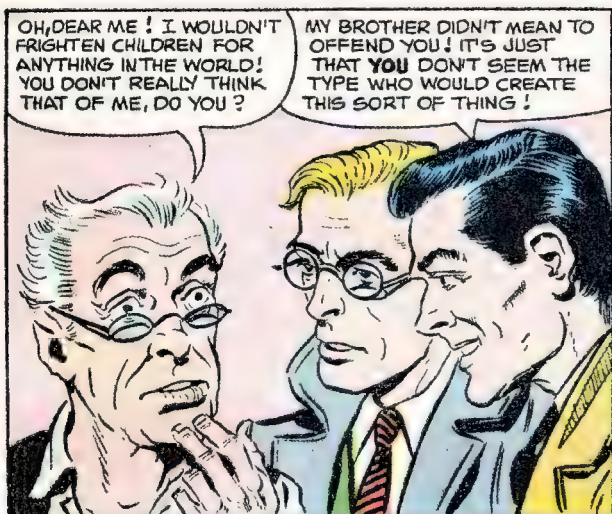
MORE THAN UNUSUAL, SIR! TO BE FRANK, WE FIND THEM DISGUSTING AND HORRIBLE!



HORRIBLE? SURELY, THAT'S TOO STRONG A WORD, YOUNG SIR! THEY'RE JUST MEANT TO AMUSE AND ENTERTAIN!

WELL, THEY DON'T ENTERTAIN ME! I'M SURPRISED THAT THE CHILDREN AREN'T FRIGHTENED OUT OF THEIR WITS!

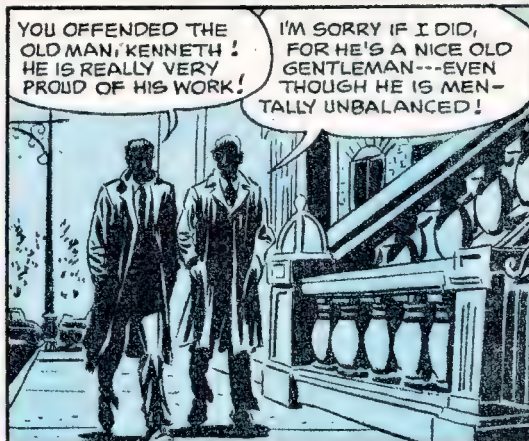




OH, DEAR ME! I WOULDN'T FRIGHTEN CHILDREN FOR ANYTHING IN THE WORLD! YOU DON'T REALLY THINK THAT OF ME, DO YOU?

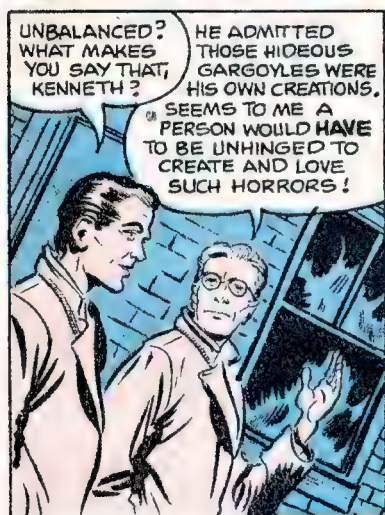
MY BROTHER DIDN'T MEAN TO OFFEND YOU! IT'S JUST THAT YOU DON'T SEEM THE TYPE WHO WOULD CREATE THIS SORT OF THING!

UNDEED, THE KINDLY OLD, WHITE HAired MAN WAS FAR DIFFERENT FROM THE TYPE OF PROPRIETOR KENNETH AND ROBERT HAD JESTINGLY IMAGINED!



YOU OFFENDED THE OLD MAN, KENNETH! HE IS REALLY VERY PROUD OF HIS WORK!

I'M SORRY IF I DID, FOR HE'S A NICE OLD GENTLEMAN---EVEN THOUGH HE IS MENTALLY UNBALANCED!



UNBALANCED? WHAT MAKES YOU SAY THAT, KENNETH?

HE ADMITTED THOSE HIDEOUS GARGOYLES WERE HIS OWN CREATIONS. SEEMS TO ME A PERSON WOULD HAVE TO BE UNHINGED TO CREATE AND LOVE SUCH HORRORS!



SEVERAL NIGHTS LATER, A TELEPHONE CALL AWAKENED ROBERT GRAHAM FROM HIS SLEEP!

HELLO?...OH, IT'S YOU, KENNETH! WHY ARE YOU CALLING AT THIS UNEARTHLY HOUR?



ROBERT! I-I'M FRIGHTENED! I SAW SOMETHING PECULIAR A LITTLE WHILE AGO! AND-AND NOW I THINK I'M BEING FOLLOWED!



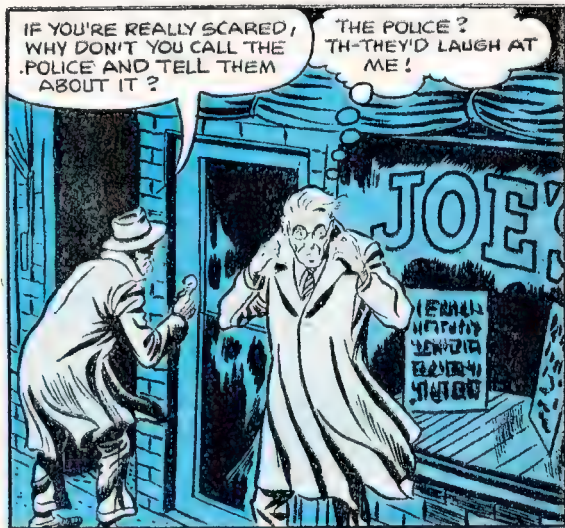
I CAN'T EXPLAIN OVER THE PHONE, ROBERT, BUT PLEASE COME AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN! I'M AT THE DINER AT NORTH AND EASTERN ROADS! HURRY!



AT LEAST I'LL BE SAFE IN HERE, UNTIL ROBERT ARRIVES!

CLOSING UP FOR THE NIGHT, MISTER! I'VE GOT A HOME TO GO TO, YOU KNOW!

HEY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?



CROUCHING IN THE NARROW CONFINES OF A DARK ALLEY, KENNETH GRAHAM HEARD THE APPROACH OF PADDING FOOTSTEPS! THEN, HIS FEAR-GLAZED EYES SAW HIS PURSUER, AND FROM HIS CONSTRICTED THROAT A FINAL SCREAM TORE ITS WAY!



ROBERT GRAHAM, SHOCKED TO IMMOBILITY, STARED AT THE SHEET COVERED BODY HE WAS TOLD WAS HIS BROTHER! HIS VOICE QUIVERED AS HE SPOKE!



WH-WHAT WAS THE CAUSE OF DEATH, OFFICER?

IT WAS A BRUTAL KILLING, MR. GRAHAM! SOME MAD-MAN MUST HAVE DONE IT! YOUR BROTHER'S THROAT WAS RIPPED TO PIECES!

WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO MURDER HIM? WHY?

WE'LL DO OUR BEST TO FIND OUT, MR. GRAHAM!



AND THEN, ONE DAY, A CERTAIN HEADLINE CAUGHT ROBERT GRAHAM'S EYE...

KENNETH NEVER HARMED ANYONE IN HIS LIFE! WHOEVER COMMITTED THIS FOUL CRIME WILL PAY FOR IT! I'LL MAKE SURE OF THAT---IF IT'S THE LAST THING I EVER DO!



BUT THE DAYS LENGTHENED INTO A WEEK, AND STILL ROBERT GRAHAM FOUND NO CLUE TO THE MURDER OF HIS BROTHER! DAILY, HE VISITED THE GRAVE!

I'LL FIND OUT WHO DID THIS TO YOU, KENNETH, AND WHEN I DO, I'LL TAKE VENGEANCE! SOMEHOW...SOMEWHERE...I'LL MEET YOUR MURDERER!



BRUTAL MURDER REVEALED!

YOU WANT TO SEE THE CORPSE?

I HAVE A SPECIAL PERMIT FROM THE POLICE! THEY SAY THIS VICTIM MET DEATH IN THE SAME WAY MY BROTHER DID A FEW WEEKS AGO!

HIS THROAT WAS TORN OUT! HE'S NOT A PRETTY SIGHT, MISTER!



THERE HE IS!

AGGHH! COVER HIM UP!



ONLY A MADMAN COULD DO A THING LIKE THAT! NO HUMAN BEING WOULD BE GUILTY OF SUCH HORROR!

I AGREE WITH YOU! I'VE BEEN ON THIS JOB FOR MANY YEARS AND HAVE SEEN SIGHTS THAT MADE MY BLOOD TURN COLD, BUT NOTHING AS SICKENING AS THIS!



THIS KILLER MUST'VE BEEN A BRUTE! ACCORDING TO THE WITNESS WHO SAW HIM RUNNING OFF, HE LOOKED LIKE A LIVING GARGOYLE!

A GARGOYLE!



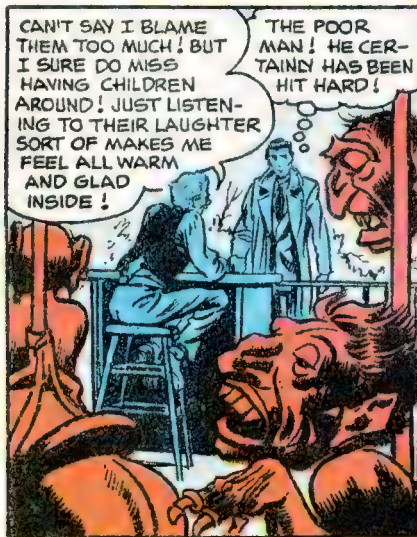
A GARGOYLE, HE SAID!...THAT KINDLY OLD MAN, AT THE HORROR-GO-ROUND! IT'S A CRAZY HUNCH, BUT I'M GOING TO FOLLOW IT THROUGH!



ROBERT GRAHAM VISITED THE HORROR-GO-ROUND. THE DISHEARTENED EXPRESSION OF THE PROPRIETOR TOUCHED HIM DEEPLY!

YOU DON'T SEEM TO HAVE MANY CUSTOMERS THESE DAYS!

...SIGH...IT'S THE FAULT OF THOSE MURDERS! WITH A REAL MONSTER RUNNING LOOSE, PEOPLE DON'T THINK IT'S FUNNY TO HAVE THEIR CHILDREN RIDE MY CREATURES.



CAN'T SAY I BLAME THEM TOO MUCH! BUT I SURE DO MISS HAVING CHILDREN AROUND! JUST LISTENING TO THEIR LAUGHTER SORT OF MAKES ME FEEL ALL WARM AND GLAD INSIDE!

THE POOR MAN! HE CERTAINLY HAS BEEN HIT HARD!



A MOANING WIND PIERCED THE NIGHT, AS ROBERT GRAHAM DROVE TO THE CEMETERY!

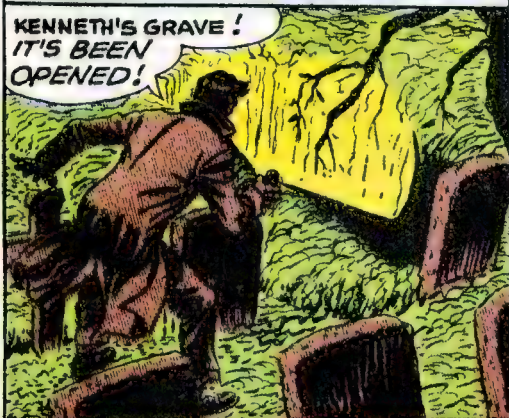
I MUST HAVE BEEN OUT OF MY MIND TO HAVE SUSPECTED THAT OLD FELLOW OF SOMEHOW BEING INVOLVED IN THE BRUTAL MURDERS.



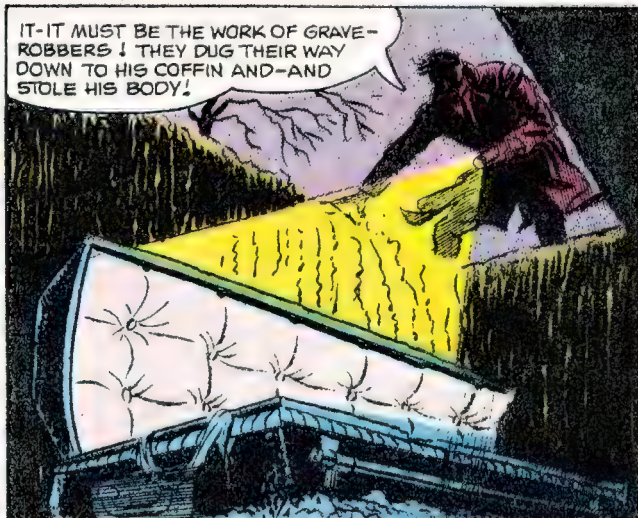
LOSING KENNETH MUST HAVE IMPAIRED MY JUDGEMENT! MERELY BECAUSE THE OLD FELLOW IS A BIT QUEER IS NO REASON TO THINK HE'S A MONSTER!

ROBERT WALKED THROUGH THE SILENT ROWS OF TOMBSTONES, UNMOVED BY THE FORBIDDING ATMOSPHERE ! BUT AT HIS BROTHER'S GRAVE, A SHRIEK OF DESPAIR RIPPED THROUGH HIM !

**KENNETH'S GRAVE !
IT'S BEEN
OPENED !**



IT-IT MUST BE THE WORK OF GRAVE-ROBBERS ! THEY DUG THEIR WAY DOWN TO HIS COFFIN AND-AND STOLE HIS BODY !



THOSE ARE FRESH FOOT-PRINTS ! B-BUT THEY AREN'T HUMAN PRINTS !



GOLD FEAR SEIZED ROBERT'S HEART, A CHILL MORE BITTER THAN THE WIND THAT SENT BLACK CLOUDS SCUDDING ACROSS THE FACE OF THE MOON !

**THE MONSTER ! HE CAME
TO GET KENNETH---EVEN IN
DEATH !**



THE TRAIL OF FOOTPRINTS IS STILL VISIBLE ! I'LL FOLLOW WHEREVER THEY LEAD, AND WHEN I DISCOVER THE FIEND WHO'S BEHIND THIS, I'LL-- I'LL KILL HIM !



FIGHTING THE MOUNTING TERROR THAT GRIPPED HIM, ROBERT GRAHAM FOLLOWED THE GRISLY TRAIL OF INHUMAN PRINTS TO...

THE HORROR-GO-ROUND !



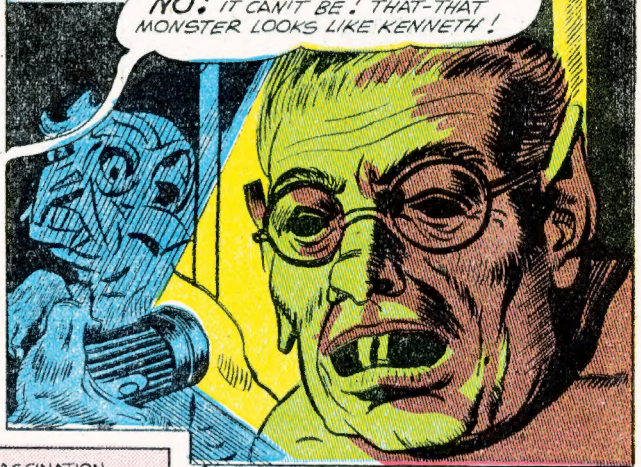
THERE IS SOME CONNECTION BETWEEN THESE HORRIBLE CRIMES, AND THE MONSTERS HERE ! IS IT POSSIBLE ? CAN THESE CREATURES BE REAL ? OR AM I GOING MAD---MAD WITH VENGEANCE ?



I REMEMBER KENNETH SAYING THAT THIS GAR-
GOYLE LOOKED LIKE OLD JEREMY WIGGINS---
WHO DIED IN AN AUTO CRASH!...HE WAS RIGHT!
IT **DOES** LOOK LIKE JEREMY!



PLAYING HIS FLASHLIGHT UPON EACH OF THE HORROR-GO-
ROUND'S FEATURES, ROBERT GRAHAM AT LAST CAME UPON
ANOTHER FACE WHOSE DEMONIC FEATURES SEEMED
FAMILIAR!



**NO! IT CAN'T BE! THAT-THAT
MONSTER LOOKS LIKE KENNETH!**

WHAT A HIDEOUS CREATURE!
WHAT COULD HAVE PROMPTED THE
OLD MAN TO FASHION ONE OF
HIS GARGOYLES IN KENNETH'S
'LIKENESS'? **WHY?**



DRAWN BY A FASCINATION
BEYOND HIS POWER TO RESIST,
ROBERT'S HAND REACHED OUT
TO TOUCH THE GARGOYLE'S FEET!



THEY--THEY'RE COVERED
WITH WET EARTH!

**AIEEEE!
IT'S ALIVE!**
I FELT IT MOVE!

BUT OF COURSE,
IT'S ALIVE!
VERY MUCH
ALIVE!



**YOU! W-WHAT
ARE YOU
SAYING?**

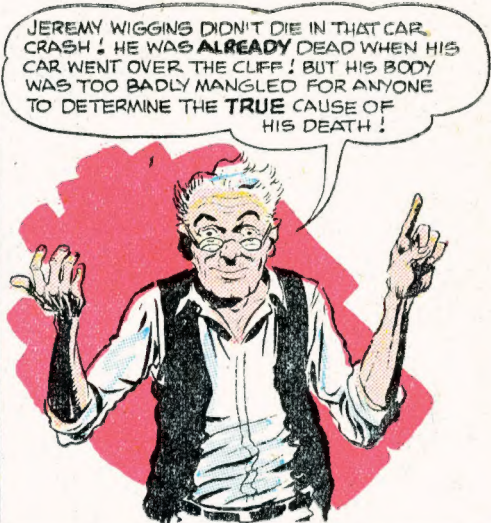
I WAS MERELY PUTTING INTO
WORDS THE SUSPICION THAT'S
BEEN GROWING IN YOUR MIND! YES,
THAT MONSTER **DID** COME
FROM YOUR BROTHER'S
GRAVE!

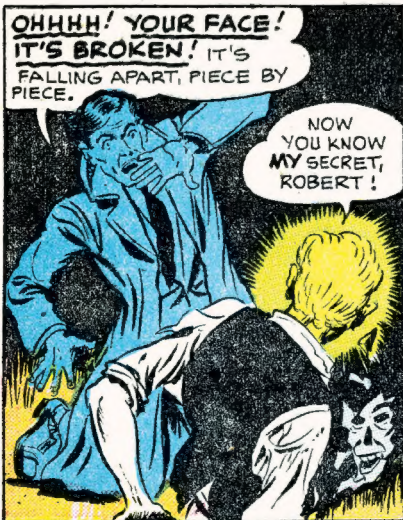


BUT HE IS NO DESPOILER OF
GRAVES, ROBERT! HE HAD THE
VERY BEST OF REASONS FOR
OPENING YOUR BROTHER'S
COFFIN! YOU SEE, **HE IS
YOUR BROTHER!**

NO!





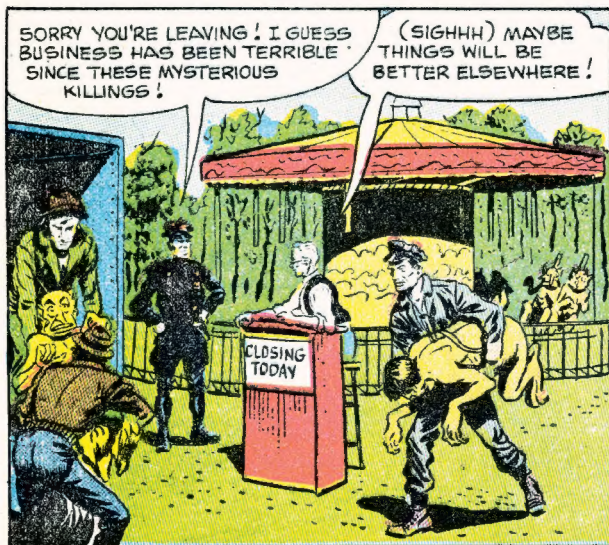
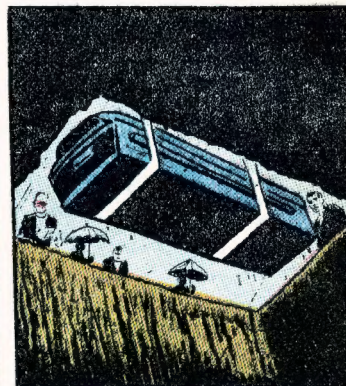


ROBERT KNEW THAT HE WAS FIGHTING FOR SOMETHING MORE THAN HIS LIFE!

BUT AS HIS STRENGTH BEGAN TO FAIL, HE GLANCED UP DESPAIRINGLY...



THAT WAS THE LAST SIGHT THAT ROBERT GRAHAM EVER SAW..... AS ROBERT GRAHAM, THERE WAS A SIMPLE FUNERAL, WITH A FEW MOURNERS AND A BRIEF FLURRY OF HEADLINES IN THE NEWSPAPERS!



Deep and groovy ruminations from IDW's
Man of Marketing, Dirk Wood

Comments, questions, suggestions, complaints, gripes, etc., are appreciated. Letters@idwpublishing.com or
IDWOrds, 5080 Santa Fe Street, San Diego, CA 92108. Join our message boards at idwpublishing.com. Follow on Twitter @IDWPublishing

February—how did that happen so fast? I swear it was just yesterday I was leaving the IDW Holiday Boat Party, wandering the streets trying to find the Waterfront Bar for another glass of holiday *spirits*. Nevertheless, it is now the month of love. If you are looking for a great gift that keeps on giving or looking for something to snuggle up with while sifting through the chocolate assortment trying to find the golden piece filled with salted caramel, IDW's February line-up is oozing with delectable books.

But, instead of pushing books like *Godzilla: Rulers of Earth* by Chris Mowry and Jeff Zornow, or *Samurai Jack* by Jim Zub and Andy Suriano, or *Wraith* by Joe Hill and Charles P. Willson III, I would like to share my list of favorite valentines...

The people that make the books you love so,

Seeing their face sends my soul aglow,

So without further ado,

Happy Valentines to the IDW crew:

Ted Adams: @therealTEDadams

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Greg Goldstein

President & COO

Robbie Robbins: @IDWrobbie

EVP & Senior Graphic Artist

Chris Ryall: @chris_ryall

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Operations



So, to you all of you, peace and love, peace and love, happy love month!

Dirk Wood

-poet, don't you know it